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OPINION METER

This week's poll:

Do you agree with the U.S. Labor report that further increasing the minimum wage will hurt the local economy?

Let your voice be heard! Go to www.saipantribune.com to cast your vote.

INSIDE

State of the Union

Bush, standing before Congress one last time, urged the nation to persevere and stay patient.

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In Mourning

Tens of thousands of Indonesians mourned former dictator Suharto during his state funeral.

ASIA...Page 15

Britney Economy

For a growing number of people and businesses, Britney Spears' saga is about money.

LIFE & STYLE...Page 18

Duffel bag prompts hospital evacuation. **PAGE 3**

17 individuals file for bankruptcy in 2007. **PAGE 5**

China Eastern supersizes plane for Shanghai-Saipan flights

China Eastern Airlines added more seats as well as first-class accommodations to its Shanghai-Saipan flights by replacing its Airbus 300 with the bigger capacity Airbus 340 plane.

Tinian Dynasty Hotel and Casino manager Tom Liu confirmed that the 284-seat A340 aircraft started servicing the route beginning Friday.

In an e-mail to the *Saipan Tribune*, Liu said the new equipment is an increase of 22 seats

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DUE TO GARMENTS' CLOSURES IN JANUARY ALONE

476 aliens, 98 locals jobless

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

A total of 476 alien workers and 98 resident workers on Saipan became jobless in January alone following the shutdown of four garment factories.

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Bishop to retire on 75th b'day in Sept.

By RIANNE PANGELINAN-BROWN
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REPORTER

Bishop Tomas A. Camacho of the Diocese of Chalan Kanoa will be stepping down as the highest ranking prelate on the islands this September, when he

See BISHOP on Page 4

Bishop Tomas A. Camacho of the Diocese of Chalan Kanoa.
JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

SPELLING BEE CHAMP JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

William S. Reyes Elementary School's Spelling Bee champion Mobtasim Alam, 11, spells a word during yesterday's final competition at the school campus. Other finalists are first runner-up Toshio Takayama, Mikhail Alcantara, Megan Oikang and Masrur Alam. Alam will represent WSR at the regional spelling bee competition in Guam in March.

On Guam, military recruiters have no problem

By BLAINE HARDEN
(C) 2008, THE WASHINGTON POST

BARRIGADA, Guam—As a recruiter for the Guam Army National Guard, Staff Sgt. Gonzalo Fernandez has oodles of time for golf. In the past two years, he has taken 18 strokes off his handicap.

Slipping away to the links, however, has done nothing to dull his rising star at the of-

See ON GUAM on Page 4

LIVES LOST

The death rate for troops from Guam and other U.S. Micronesian islands during service in Afghanistan and Iraq is higher than that of any other jurisdiction.

Here is a comparative rate of troop deaths in Iraq and Afghanistan per 100,000 inhabitants:

GUAM – 5.8
VIRGINIA – 1.66
TEXAS – 1.61
MARYLAND – 1.35
CALIFORNIA – 1.29
WASHINGTON, D.C. – 1.02

(c) 2008, The Washington Post

Staff Sgt. Gonzalo Fernandez has won the Army National Guard's regional recruiter of the year award for the past two years; recruits are so abundant in Guam that he sees them by appointment only.
THE WASHINGTON POST

Local

‘Most number of FDM bombings was in ’07’

By AGNES E. DONATO
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REPORTER

Last year saw the most bombings occur on Farallon de Mendinilla in the past eight years, according to the U.S. Navy.

In 2007, a total of 3,277 ordnance were dropped on the island located north of Saipan. This more than nearly double the number of ordnance dropped on FDM in 2005 and 2006 combined.

In the past eight-year period, the second largest number of bombings on FDM occurred in 2001. A total of 3,039 ordnance were dropped on the island in that year.

The FDM ordnance report was part of a presentation to the House of Representatives yesterday. Roy Tsutsui, defense coordinating officer and political-military adviser to the U.S. Naval Forces Marianas, conducted the presentation amid lawmakers’ concern about the environmental impact of live-fire training on FDM.

Tsutsui noted that the local community has several opportunities to voice their concerns about military activities on the islands.

The U.S. Navy is currently updating its environmental impact study on the Marianas range complex. The last such study was done in 1999. The

See MOST on Page 4

The facade of the Naked Fish Bar & Grill in Beach Road Garapan. JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

Naked Fish to reopen tonight

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSISTANT EDITOR

Naked Fish will reopen tonight after being closed since Jan. 1, 2008, for renovations.

YCO Corp. general manager Ralph Yumul said the trendy Beach Road establishment was closed since the start of the year because management wants to shift its target market toward the sports bar set.

YCO Corp. is the parent company of Naked Fish and other companies on Saipan: Jollibee, Liberty Plaza, and Do It Best Hardware.

“We’re taking a different angle. Last year we saw trends emerging in the bar scene and it’s shifting more toward sports bars. …Customers are not that hot for music lounges anymore. Our angle this year is to try to tap into that market [sports bar],” he said in an interview with the Saipan Tribune last week.

To meet this end, Naked Fish went through a minor $2,000-$3,000 renovation this past four weeks that included a change in paint scheme and the raising of the bar.

“Our approach now is to get customers that shoot darts and

See NAKED on Page 4

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INCLUDING $500
and room nights at
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PACIFIC ISLANDS CLUB
PEPSI
Miller Lite
Charley’s

Duffel bag prompts hospital evacuation

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

A black military duffel bag that was unintentionally left behind by a patient resulted in the evacuation of a portion of the Commonwealth Health Center building in Garapan yesterday morning.

Police checked the bag and found no explosives inside it and within the hospital's premises. The bag's owner later arrived and picked up his bag, according to Department of Public Safety spokesperson Lei Ogumoro.

Bomb experts cleared the hospital at 9:04am, nearly two hours after the discovery of the bag.

Ogumoro said police were dispatched to CHC at 7:13am after receiving a report of a suspicious bag. The bag was found outside the entrance doors leading to the pharmacy located on the second floor of the CHC building. DPS Explosive Response Team, Customs officers, and police immediately responded to CHC.

Ogumoro said preliminary investigation showed that a security guard discovered the unattended black military duffel bag at the entrance doors.

Police closed off the entrance of the building as well as the entrance leading to the emergency room. A Custom's canine dog was also used to search the parking lot for any secondary explosive devices.

All emergencies were diverted to DPS Fire Station II in Garapan until the situation was resolved. People in the emergency room, pharmacy, adjoining offices and second floor parking lot were evacuated from the area.

Ogumoro said further investigation revealed that an outpatient had unintentionally left the duffel bag Monday night. CHC personnel were able to identify and contact the patient. The patient later picked up the bag.

Ogumoro said that hospital patients were not evacuated as they were far from the location where the bag was found.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial, center, poses with visiting Archbishop Charles Daniel Balvo, Apostolic Delegate to the Pacific, second from left, Bishop Thomas Camacho, left, and members of the clergy for the Diocese of Chalan Kanoa, at the airport Monday morning.

Archbishop meets with CNMI clergy

By RIANNE PANGELINAN-BROWN
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REPORTER

CNMI clergy and nuns congregated at the Fiesta Resort & Spa yesterday to welcome Archbishop Charles Daniel Balvo and to hear him talk of his visits to the Pacific Islands.

According to Chalan Kanoa Bishop Tomas. A. Camacho, the archbishop was to have visited last year but he had to go to Denver to take care of another important business.

"One of our people was up for capital punishment and he had to leave to plead for his life. We asked the archbishop to reschedule and we are so grateful to him for giving us that chance," said Camacho.

In an interview yesterday, Balvo said that this is his first visit to the CNMI and that he finds it "very beautiful."

Balvo kicked off Catholic Schools' Week yesterday at the Mount Carmel Cathedral. He is scheduled to visit Rota this morning and then Tinian tomorrow.

He said it is part of his function to serve as a link between the center of the Catholic Church in Rome and the local church.

He explained that he is the post representative to New Zealand and to all of the islands, countries and territories that belong to the Bishops Conference of the Pacific.

Balvo said he has visited all the islands in the Pacific except for the Solomon Islands.

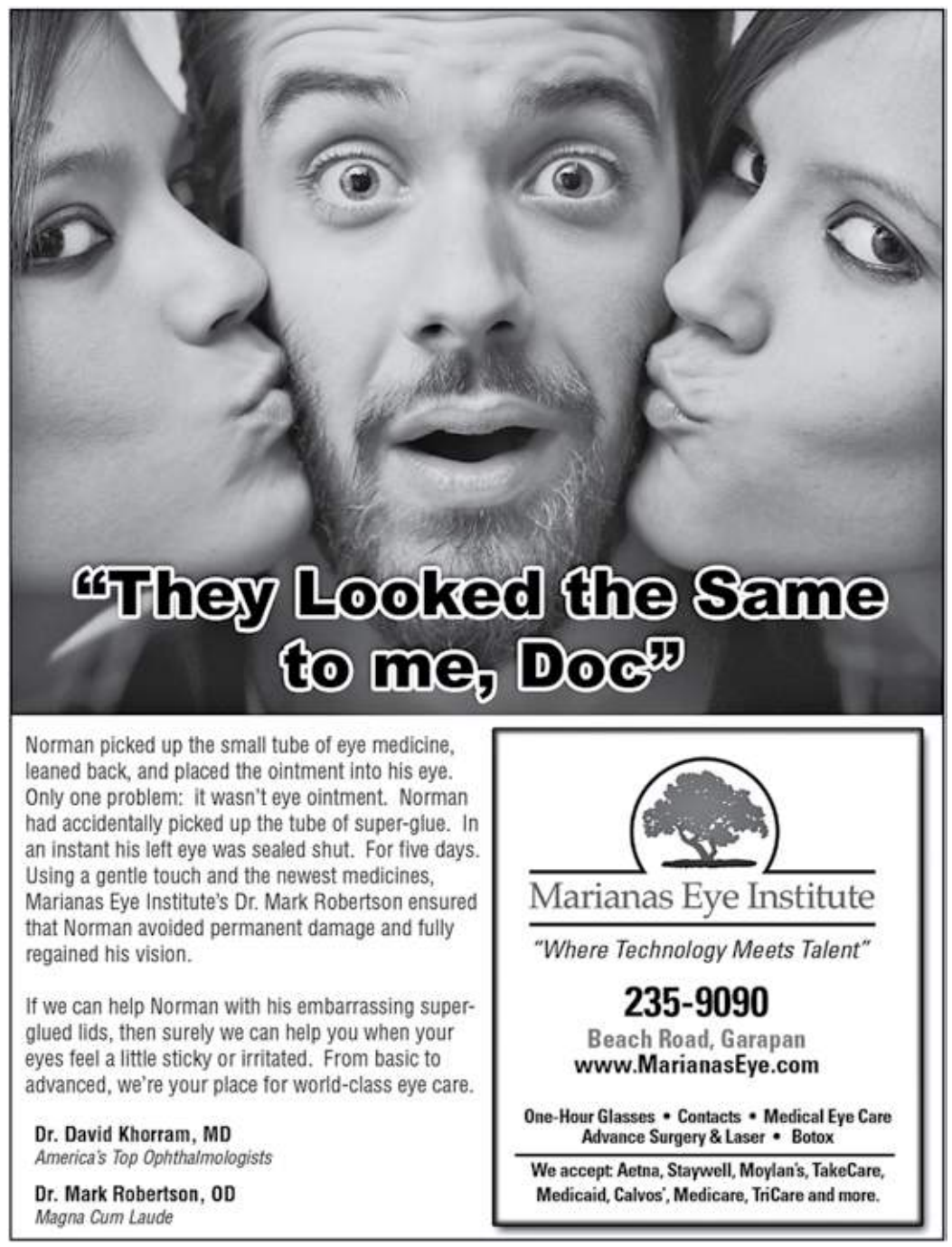
Fr. Ryan Jimenez said that this was the first time that the Vatican's apostolic delegate to the Pacific visited the island.

He said Balvo's visit will enable the archbishop to experience the life and activity of the local church, interact with the local people, and share with them his reflections at the Mass services scheduled on Rota, Saipan and Tinian.

"Archbishop Balvo's first visit to our islands is a great honor," declared Bishop Camacho. In a way, "Rome becomes closer to us having a representative of the Holy Father in our midst."

Camacho explained that this visit is important because, as the Apostolic Delegate, Balvo will convey to Rome the life and concerns of the local church.

Balvo was appointed Apostolic Delegate to the Pacific on April 1, 2005, the same time he was appointed Nuncio to New Zealand and other countries in the South Pacific. He was ordained archbishop on June 29, 2005.


"They Looked the Same to me, Doc"
Norman picked up the small tube of eye medicine, leaned back, and placed the ointment into his eye. Only one problem: it wasn't eye ointment. Norman had accidentally picked up the tube of super-glue. In an instant his left eye was sealed shut. For five days. Using a gentle touch and the newest medicines, Marianas Eye Institute's Dr. Mark Robertson ensured that Norman avoided permanent damage and fully regained his vision.
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476

From Page 1

Most foreign garment workers opted to stay and look for jobs in the CNMI, according to Labor records. Most of these workers are Chinese.

In the latest case, the closure of garment manufacturer Poong-In Saipan Inc. in Afetnas on Monday rendered 105 alien workers jobless. Labor investigator Carlos Camacho told *Saipan Tribune* yesterday that only 42 of Poong-In's guest workers expressed intention to leave the island.

Camacho said that Poong-In's workers also include 20 citizens of the Federated States of Micronesia.

Labor records also show that the closure of Sam Kwang Saipan Corp. in Afetnas on Jan. 18 left 157 alien workers and 14 resident workers jobless.

Neo Fashion's shutdown in San Antonio on Jan. 13 resulted in 88 foreign workers and 13 resident workers scampering for new jobs.

When L&S Apparel Inc. ceased operations on New Year's Eve, 126 alien workers and 51 resident workers were left jobless.

According to Camacho, more foreign garment workers and resident workers will be jobless as three more factories will be closing in February.

When that happens, Camacho said there will only be six factories that will remain standing: Rifu, Onwell Manufacturing, United International Corp., Kyung Seung Saipan Inc., Marianas Garment Manufacturing, and Uno Moda.

Many garment factories closed down on the island since January 2005, when the World Trade Organization lifted trade quotas. This has allowed Third World countries to export their garments to the U.S. With their lower manufacturing and labor costs, they could offer their products at a much lower rate than those made in the CNMI.

Of all garment factories that have shut down, only Jin Apparel expressed intention to reopen. It is now reconfiguring its operations to handle non-labor intensive garment manufacturing.

Last month, Jin Apparel announced that the management did not renew the contracts of majority of its workers as the company is obtaining other contracts for non-knit projects that would require new and bigger computerized machines.

CNMI used to have 34 garment factories, all located on Saipan. The garment industry used to contribute some $60 million in direct taxes a year to the local government.

BISHOP

From Page 1

celebrates his 75th birthday.

The regulations regarding Church governance, known as Canon Law, require a diocesan bishop who has completed his 75th year of age, to offer his resignation from office to the Holy Father in Rome.

Pursuant to this provision of Canon Law, Camacho said he will submit his letter of resignation to Pope Benedict on his 75th birthday, Sept. 18, 2008.

Camacho said he will relinquish his position as bishop.

"Once the pope accepts my resignation letter, then he will appoint a new one, who will then take over the administration of the diocese and then I will step down," said the bishop.

Although Camacho will submit his resignation this year as required by law, "it is still up to the pope to accept it. How soon? Nobody knows."

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops stated that the process for appointing a bishop can take six to eight months.

Camacho said that when he finally steps down, he "will still continue to be a priest around here."

He added that it is time for him to retire and he is certainly looking forward to it.

Just recently, Camacho completed translating the New Testament Bible into Chamorro. The new Bible includes all of the 27 books of the New Testament translated to Chamorro.

The Chamorro New Testament, Camacho said, was his lifelong work, involving the translation of the Christian Greek Scriptures into the Chamorro language. It's taken him 21 years to complete the work, which included the translation of prayer books.

CHINA

From Page 1

over China Eastern's A300 plane, which seats 262.

"We are very delighted that China Eastern is making this commitment to offer more seats to handle the demand of [the] China market. It's not much, but it shows China Eastern's commitment to upgrade their service for this route," he said.

Century Tours operations manager Nomi Ma said she is delighted that they will now be able to sell more seats as well as high-end accommodations to customers from China.

"It's a lot better than the A300 and also has more seats. We will also be able to sell first-class seats to satisfy our customers' request. …We will now be able to tap into the high-end market," she said in a telephone interview.

Ma said she expects Century Tours, an affiliate of this newspaper, and Tinian Dynasty's Tinian Dynasty International Travel, could start selling first-class tickets as early as Feb. 8, 2008.

Liu said with the rate the Shanghai-Saipan flight is going, increasing the weekly flights from the current two to four is not farfetched.

"With the continued positive responses from the travelers, there is no reason not to increase the weekly frequency to four flights per week, up from the present two weekly flights," he said. "We'll see how the low season traffic trend is, then we can decide whether it makes economic sense to increase frequency."

Ma, on the other hand, said the destination holds a lot of promise, especially with the China market.

"They [Chinese from Shanghai] really like Saipan because it's really different from other destinations like Thailand and Indonesia. Yesterday I was briefing a group of 120 people and they were inquiring about a lot of activities on Saipan, especially fishing, trawling, and bottom fishing, etc.," she said.

Ma added that she was also surprised at how much the segment knows about the CNMI.

"They have a lot of knowledge about Saipan right now probably because of our promotions and the Internet. Feedback has really been quite positive," she said.

Century Tours and Tinian Dynasty International Travel were able to re-negotiate successfully with China Eastern to resume the twice-weekly flights operating every Friday and Monday from Shanghai to Saipan.

The service resumed last Jan. 11.

Flights depart from Pudong Airport at 20:00 and arrive on Saipan at 02:15 the following morning. Return flights to Shanghai depart Saipan at 04:00 and arrive in Shanghai at 05:00 every Saturday and Tuesday.

China Eastern made its last charter flight from Shanghai to Saipan in Aug. 24, 2007. It was suspended after the carrier asked Tinian Dynasty and Century Tours for a new charter fee hike.

The charter flight was originally launched in January 2004 and became regular in July 2004. ***(Mark Rabago)***

ON GUAM

From Page 1

fice. Thanks to the eagerness of young Americans on this remote Pacific island to join the military, Fernandez is a two-time winner of the Guard's recruiter of the year award for a seven-state western region that includes Colorado, Utah and California.

"I'll win it again this year," said Fernandez, who also expects to have time for a lot more midweek golf. "I have a very relaxing life."

On the U.S. mainland, long-running wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have made life miserable for military recruiters. The armed forces have repeatedly missed enlistment targets, and standards have been lowered in response. More recruits with criminal records and histories of drug abuse have been allowed to enlist. And recruiters, pressured to meet quotas, have increasingly been accused of unethical and criminal misconduct.

Nothing of the sort is happening here.

Part of the reason is economic. Poverty rates and unemployment on Guam—a U.S. territory located more than 7,500 miles west of Los Angeles—are historically much higher than on the mainland, and wages are low. Schools are poor, and technical training is hard to find. There is not much for young people to do.

But these are not the most important reasons, according to enlistees and recruiters, families of soldiers killed in action and veterans of the Iraq war.

The key factor, they agree, is the island's unique status in American history. People here grow up with war ringing in their ears—as described by their grandparents.

Guam, a U.S. possession since it was taken in 1898 from the Spanish, is the only American soil with a sizable population to have been occupied by a foreign military power.

During World War II, the Japanese held the island for almost three years and brutalized nearly everyone on it. They created concentration camps, forcing the indigenous Chamorro people to work as slave labor and sex slaves.

"If there is a group of Americans who understand the price of freedom, we do," said Michael Cruz, lieutenant governor of Guam and a colonel in the Army National Guard.

Cruz's grandmother told him awful stories: She was held in a concentration camp. She was forced to watch as Japanese soldiers chopped off the heads of her brother and her eldest son. Her eldest daughters were forced into prostitution.

Today, Guam is a haven for Japanese tourists, who account for most of the visitors to the island and whose spending powers much of the economy. But people haven't forgotten.

"We saw war in color—the beaches were splattered with blood," said Cruz, referring to the 1944 liberation of Guam by U.S. forces, in which 3,000 Americans and 18,000 Japanese were killed.

"When our nation calls us to serve, it is for us to answer it," Cruz said.

So military recruiters on Guam and the Northern Mariana Islands, also administered by the United States, have an embarrassment of riches. Standards have not been lowered. Targets are routinely exceeded. At his Army National Guard office, Fernandez meets potential recruits only if they call ahead and make an appointment.

With a population of 173,000, Guam ranked No. 1 in 2007 for recruiting success in the Army National Guard's assessment of 54 states and territories.

"I have got 12 people who want to join up this month," Fernandez said. "But I can only process three of them because of lack of doctors to give them physicals. We can afford to be picky."

Roshjun Aguon, 19, plans to join the Army when he finishes his agriculture studies at the University of Guam, where he is in ROTC.

Serving in the military, he said, is in his family's blood. His father, his two uncles and most of his cousins have joined. His cousin Richard Junior Naputi, 24, was killed two years ago in Iraq by an improvised explosive device.

"Of course the unpopularity of this war affects us," Aguon said. "Mothers and sisters do not want to see us go off to war. But it is a tradition for my family."

And for the entire population. Liberation Day, July 21, is far and away the most important of Guam's holidays—and is celebrated for the better part of a month, with speeches, parades and wild parties.

During the Vietnam War, at least 70 servicemen from Guam were killed, a death rate nearly three times the national average. That war was not viewed on Guam as misguided or a failure, many residents here say.

In the current wars, Micronesia is absorbing an exceptionally high death toll—10 from Guam, 14 from the rest of Micronesia. On a per-capita basis, various parts of Micronesia have killed-in-action rates up to five times as high as on the mainland.

But that has not hurt recruiting. In fact, commanders here limit the number of war-zone duty tours for which soldiers can volunteer—so that other soldiers can get a chance to see action, according to Lt. Col. Marvin Manibusan, commander of the Guam Army National Guard's recruiting and retention division.

MOST

From Page 2

new study will take into account changes in military technology and training requirement.

He also noted that the Joint Guam Program Office is conducting its environmental impact study on the planned military buildup in the region.

Public scoping meetings have been conducted on both studies.

Furthermore, the CNMI can participate in dialogue with the military through the civilian-military task force created by the governor.

Rep. Ray N. Yumul said that Tsutsui's presentation was "satisfactory" and "a good start for future discussions."

"There is a lot of information that we need to analyze carefully. We will continue to engage the military on how to protect FDM from further deterioration and to mitigate the damage that has been done on the island," Yumul said.

Farallon de Mendinilla has been used as a live fire range since 1976, pursuant to a lease agreement between the U.S. and CNMI governments. The lease is for 50 years with a possible 50-year extension.

Lawmakers have expressed concern about FDM had lost a significant amount of landmass due to the bombing exercises on the island.

NAKED

From Page 2

socialize drinking. …We're trying to get into the dart league and we've already contacted them [SEDA] and they are trying to put us in their circuit," said Yumul.

He said Naked Fish will situate the electronic dart machines on the west side of the restaurant to separate the noise from the main dining area.

Yumul said changing customer taste last year resulted in Naked Fish not performing as well as previous years and this prompted YCO Corp. to rethink its strategy.

"Last year, compared to the previous years, wasn't a good year for us at Naked Fish. That's why we're making the change. Our original plan was to make it into a full-fledged sports bar but because of our love of food and cooking, we will reopen Naked Fish as a sports bar and grill," said Yumul.

He said they will also upgrade their karaoke system as they will try and retain some of Naked Fish's previous market, which embraced that type of entertainment.

Yumul said Naked Fish's menu will be mostly the same, but customers will now have a choice of Filipino and local food on the revamped food list.

He said Naked Fish will also concentrate more on catering this year. Naked Fish is one of only two companies that have been approved to cater to the U.S. Army Reserve.

17 individuals file for bankruptcy in 2007

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

No business filed a bankruptcy case in federal court in 2007, but 17 individuals did.

According to documents filed in the U.S. District Court for the NMI, of the 17 individual bankruptcy cases, most filed for Chapter 7 bankruptcy and a few for Chapter 13.

The last person to file was on Dec. 14, 2007, court records show.

Under Bankruptcy Chapter 7, most assets of the debtor are liquidated as quickly as possible to pay off his creditors to the extent possible and to free the debtor to start anew.

Bankruptcy Chapter 13, also known as reorganization bankruptcy, is filed by individuals who want to pay off their debts over a period of three to five years.

In 2006, there were 16 bankruptcy cases, mostly individuals, filed in federal court—a 48 percent decrease from 2005.

It was in 2005 when an all-time record of 31 cases were recorded in the CNMI. The 31 cases broke the 25-record that was registered in 2001 and 2002.

One of the main reasons why many filed bankruptcy cases in 2005 was reportedly because of the effectivity of the Bankruptcy Abuse Prevention and Consumer Protection Act of 2005, a law that increased the filing fee and made the petition stricter, among other things.

Bankruptcy cases in the CNMI began to soar in 1998 due to the economic crisis that struck Asia. From 18 in 1998 the record went up to 23 in 2000, according to court documents.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

CHAMPION SPELLERS

William S. Reyes Elementary School's Spelling Bee champion Mobtasim Alam, 11, poses with his proud parents Manzurul Alam, Touhida Alam and brother Masrur, who is also a spelling bee whiz. Alam will represent the school at the regional spelling bee competition in Guam in March.

Fund warns vs double-dipping

By AGNES E. DONATO
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REPORTER

The NMI Retirement Fund has warned government agencies against hiring pensioners.

Fund administrator Mark Aguon advised department heads and supervisors to verify with the pension program the retirement status of job applicants before hiring them.

"All department and activity heads are urged to avoid the needless embarrassment and expense to their employees, and potentially themselves, by inquiring into the retirement status of all potential employment applicants," Aguon said in a memorandum.

"The Board of Trustees takes the position that retired employees, with minimal exceptions, are not government employment-eligible, and that these available positions should be utilized for non-retired members within the eligible workforce," he added.

Retirees caught working for government while receiving pension benefits may have their benefits suspended and may be sued over the benefits paid out to them during the period of "double dipping."

In a recent case involving a consultant to Saipan Mayor Juan B. Tudela, the court upheld the order of the Fund board of trustees to recover pension benefits improperly given to the double dipping retiree.

In ordering the funds recouped from Michael C. Malone, Superior Court associate judge David Wiseman also urged the Fund to ensure the error did not happen again.

"The court hopes that after this experience, the Retirement Fund audits its records to determine if it has made other similar mistakes in the past and enforces the constitutional and statutory mandates to recoup all monies distributed in contravention to the constitutional double dipping restrictions," Wiseman said.

High-surf advisory out yesterday

The Emergency Management Office issued a high-surf alert yesterday to warn beachgoers of dangerous conditions at sea until late afternoon.

Based on information received from the National Weather Service in Guam, a north swell generated by strong winds east of Japan was causing hazardous surf on north facing exposures of the Mariana islands through yesterday afternoon.

The high surf advisory was in effect until 4pm yesterday along north facing reefs

EMO is advising the public to avoid venturing near reefs and exposed beaches as wind and wave conditions support dangerous rip currents. Rip currents are life threatening to anyone entering the water. ***(EMO)***

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Versa S | #7L398849 | White | $15,990.00
Sentra | #7L611483 | Gray | $16,990.00
Frontier XE | #7C409237 | White | $23,390.00
Frontier SE | #7C408903 | Silver | $26,990.00
Pathfinder | #6C674658 | Granite | $28,990.00
FORD | STOCK # | COLOR | PRICE
Ranger | #7PA31119 | White | $16,990.00
Fusion | #7R127180 | Pearl | $18,990.00
Escape | #7KB45887 | Silver | $19,990.00
F-150 | #6NB05745 | White | $21,990.00
Sport Trac | #7UA65392 | Gold | $26,990.00
HONDA | STOCK # | COLOR | PRICE
Fit | #7S025556 | Mist | $14,995.00
Fit Sport | #7S025501 | Blue | $16,495.00
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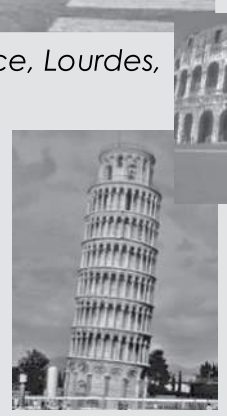

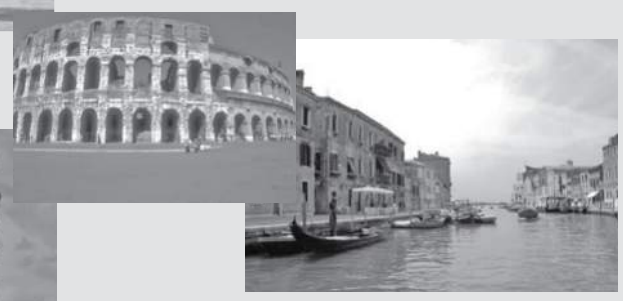

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Labor's loss is other gov't agencies' gain

By AGNES E. DONATO
agnes_donato@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The U.S. Office of Insular Affairs has started providing to other recipients the $420,000 federal grant refused by the Fitial administration.

David Cohen, the outgoing deputy assistant secretary for insular affairs, said that $100,000 of the labor initiative grant funds was given to Karidat during a visit by OIA director Nikolao Pula earlier this month.

The other recipients will be announced shortly.

The CNMI government refused the funds because it did not agree with the new grant terms and conditions imposed by the federal government.

The original $420,000 grant was to have been followed by a grant that is an amalgamation of unused grant funds from previous years. The amount of that grant would be $350,000. The same conditions that were to have applied to the $420,000 grant will apply to the $350,000 grant.

Cohen, who leaves his post tomorrow, said he had authorized his staff to discuss with CNMI Attorney General Matthew Gregory the flexible ways in which the CNMI can comply with the grant conditions.

"The conditions are, as we have been saying, quite reasonable and not at all onerous. If they are able to get comfortable with the conditions this time, then we can make the $350,000 available," Cohen said.

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial has called the new grant conditions "unprecedented, unnecessary, and unproductive," and insists that the grant be made on the same basis that it has been in the past.

Under the new terms of the federal grant, the CNMI government must consult with OIA officials before filling any position at the Department of Labor and at the Office of the Attorney General. Positions funded by the funds should be exempt from travel and hiring freezes, local government austerity holidays, and other cost-saving measures. If the CNMI government terminates any federally funded position or employee, it could lose the remaining funds for that position.

Furthermore, personnel funding will depend on the AGO and DOL's compliance with their respective memoranda of agreement with the Federal Ombudsman's Office.

"Our CNMI Initiative grants are not and never have been a blank check to the CNMI government. These are U.S. taxpayer funds, and my office has a duty to ensure that the funds are allocated effectively to address important needs in labor and immigration," Cohen had said in explaining the new conditions.

Responders learn how to deal with major hazards

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Two public safety and security instructors from the Texas Engineering Extension Service are currently training local emergency planners and responders on how to prepare for, respond to, and recover from any major hazard and mass casualty events.

Monroe Manley and John Sisario started Monday their three-day Threat and Risk Assessment Course sponsored by the Department of Homeland Security's Office of Grants and Training at the Pacific Islands Club.

About 18 personnel from the Department of Public Safety, Court Marshals, Commonwealth Ports Authority, and other law enforcement agencies participated in the training.

In an interview with *Saipan Tribune*, Manley said he and Sisario are teaching participants the five-assessment type process on how to identify their vulnerabilities and what the consequences of an all-hazard incident on the island would accomplish.

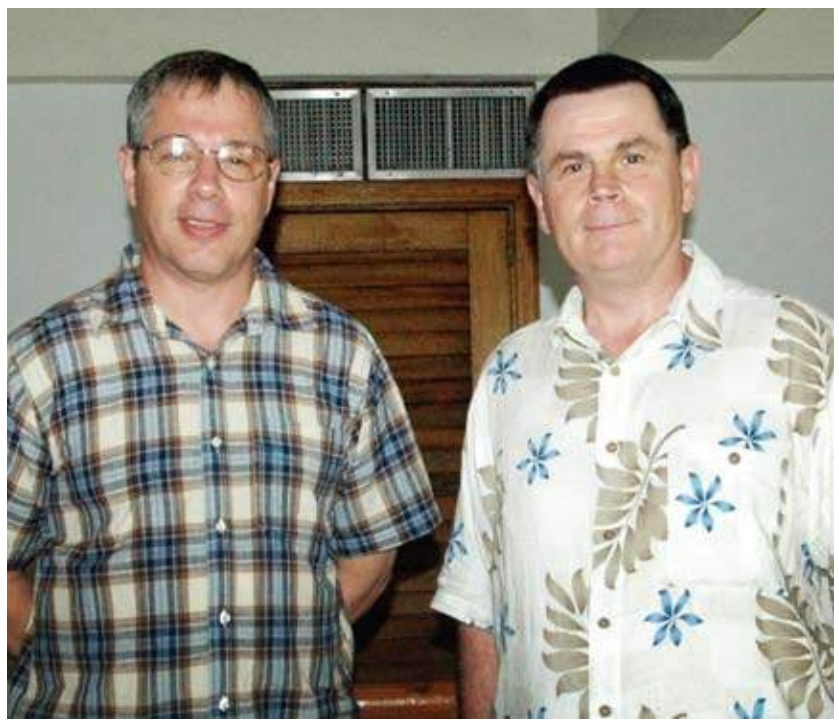
"We would look at what our capabilities are, what we desire to have and what we currently have and then identify what our needs are," Manley said.

He said the entire process is called risk assessment and needs assessment to help the islands be better prepared to respond to and recover from all-hazard incidents, calamities or major accidents.

"We teach all these guys how to work together as a team in responding to and recovering from these type of incidents," Manley said.

The instructor said local responders are really good at reacting to things that are normal for certain duration and for certain intensity.

"They can respond to those things and handle them very well. But what happens if an incident occurs outside of that normality? Have we planned for that? Do we have the resources to respond to it? And if not, have we identified what our plan needs to be?" he said.



JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ
Texas Engineering Extension Service instructors John Sisario and Monroe Manley during the Threat & Risk Assessment Course at the Pacific Islands Club in San Antonio Monday.

Manley cited that gasoline is probably the most major commodity on the island. "What would happen if your storage for your gasoline is in bad shape?" he asked.

Under the Threat and Risk Assessment Course, Manley said, they are teaching local participants how to prevent major bad things from happening.

"It does not have to be terrorists' acts. It could be an accident. Somebody accidentally blows up one of those [fuel storage] by accident, then you will be without fuel for quite a while. And your power plants depend on fuel," he said.

Manley said they are teaching the process, but the local jurisdiction has to come up with its own risk assessment. "We teach them how to do that and they have to do that," he added.

Yesterday, the instructors conducted field exercise by visiting sites and learning how to do the actual vulnerability assessment.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
A lighted candle inside the bedroom reportedly started the fire that burned down this house in Chalan Kanoa Thursday night last week.

Red Cross helps CK fire victims

The NMI Chapter of the American Red Cross recently helped a Chalan Kanoa family whose home was destroyed by fire Thursday night.

"The house burned to the ground and the family lost everything," said Joe Jetnil, a Red Cross disaster volunteer.

A Department of Public Safety Report said that an unattended lighted candle inside the bedroom triggered the fire.

No one was reported injured in the blaze as nobody was home when the fire broke out. This is the third time that a fire originating from a lit candle happened since October last year.

The house, which was made of wooden/tin materials, sustained extensive heat and smoke damage. Its roof collapsed.

DPS spokesperson Lei Ogumoro said that investigators have classified the incident as an accident.

Police identified the home's owner as David C. Angui, who was reportedly at a neighbor's house when the fire started. Ogumoro said two families, including Angui and his 19-year-old daughter, occupied the house.

The Red Cross arrived at the fire scene and offered immediate assistance to the family by providing housing, food and clothing. The Red Cross is also providing financial assistance to purchase school supplies, building materials and other essential items.

Disaster assistance is free to families and made possible through the generous donations of people here in the CNMI.

To learn more about the Red Cross or to volunteer on the DAT team, contact Emergency Services director Juan D. Tenorio at the NMI Chapter. ***(Saipan Tribune)***

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Zooming into zoning: Training set

People are flocking to the Zoning Office to prepare for the new Saipan Zoning Law that goes into effect on Feb. 1.

"We're grateful that so many property owners and developers are taking the law seriously," said Zoning administrator Steve Tilley. "Mostly, they want to document their existing businesses and signs that don't conform to the new standards. However, there is confusion about what the owners of existing buildings, businesses and signs need to do."

The Zoning Office urges owners to check if their existing businesses, structures, or signs are in compliance with the new law. If they are not in compliance, owners may submit a request to verify that their "nonconforming use" was in existence on Feb. 1 when the law goes into effect. However, this is only a voluntary application; it is not required. Also, owners do not have to submit this information before Feb. 1.

"Some people are panicked because they think they have to document their nonconforming use by Feb. 1 and we want them to know they can submit after that date," said Tilley.

Another question heard often at the Zoning Office is whether people will have to remove nonconforming uses. Tilley said that in most cases, nonconforming uses will be allowed to remain in place. There is even a process to convert a nonconforming use to a conforming use.

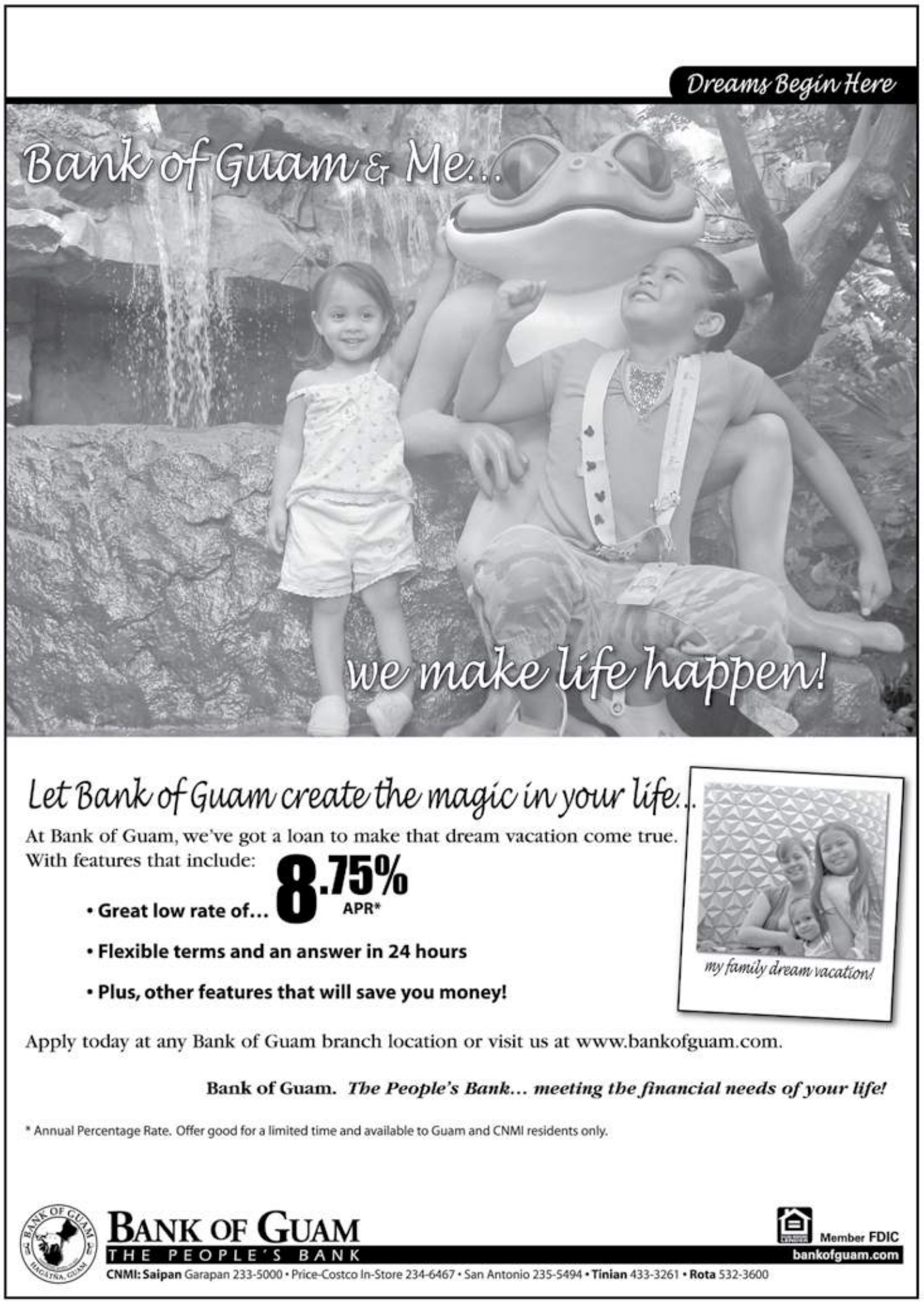
Free training

The Zoning Office will give another public training session on the new Saipan Zoning Law. A special invitation is extended to those who plan to build a new commercial or residential structure; repair or expand an existing structure; move a business into a new or existing building; maintain an existing sign or make a new one; continue or start an adult business; subdivide property; start a home business; or continue operating or maintaining a nonconforming building, or sign.

The training is free and no pre-registration is required. It will be held at the Multi-Purpose Center in Susupe on Feb. 12, 2008. Session 1 is from 8:30am to 11:30am; session 2 is from 1:30pm to 4:30pm.

The Zoning Office in DanDan will be closed on Feb. 12. Zoning staff will be available that day at the Multi-Purpose Center from 8:30am to 11:30am and from 1:30pm to 4pm to answer questions and to take permit applications.

Attendees should bring a copy of the law to the training session for reference. Copies of the law and maps can be downloaded from www.zoning.gov.mp. The Zoning Office also has copies for sale for $10 at the 2nd floor, Joeten Building, DanDan. Call 234-9663/7 for more information. ***(PR)***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Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

JANUARY 30, 2001

Moves on to repeal 3-year limit

Work is now underway in the upper house of the CNMI Legislature to repeal a current law that limits the stay of nonresident workers in the Commonwealth to three years, after which they will be barred from coming back until after six months. In an interview with reporters yesterday, Senate Floorleader Pete P. Reyes said a proposal that seeks to eliminate the three-year limit has already been introduced and is currently sitting in the upper chamber for a deeper and thorough review.

Youths call for preservation of life

CNMI's elected youth leaders have joined hands with a large group of local community members including the religious sector in denouncing abortion practices in the Commonwealth. Members of the 3rd CNMI Youth Congress declared their categorical position by passing this month a resolution that clearly states their pro-life stance on the issue.

CNMI officials to travel to Taiwan

Officials from the CNMI government are expected to travel to Taipei to meet with their Taiwanese counterparts and business leaders there, as part of overall efforts to ensure continued air transport service between the Asian country and Saipan. In an interview with reporters yesterday, Gov. Pedro P. Tenorio disclosed he would be joining the CNMI delegation of government officials in a trip to Taiwan early February for a trade mission, that may include a possible meeting with the country's aviation officials.

JANUARY 30, 2002

Jobless rate hike in Japan to affect NMI

The CNMI economy is in for another year of upheaval as Japan's unemployment rate reached a record-high of 5.6 percent in December-a trend seen to diminish the remaining hopes of the Commonwealth's tourism industry. Local businessmen expressed serious doubts that the CNMI economy will stabilize by midyear as earlier projected, as travel security and recession continue to hit Japan and other Asian countries.

One division, two masters

To paraphrase rap artist Eminem, will the real Slim Shady at the customs division please stand up! That might as well be the refrain of employees at the Division of Customs, after the recent appointment of Frank Taitano as director of the division, despite the fact that Director Joe Mafnas is still occupying the post.

$193-M budget predicted in '99

It's like waking up from a nightmare, only to find out that the nightmare is actually real. Three years ago, in 1999, the Department of Finance had projected that General Fund revenues would plunge to $193 million. No surprises there. The CNMI Fiscal Outlook report prepared by the Office of the Governor said as much when it projected the Fiscal Year 2001-2002 revenues to descend to that level.

JANUARY 30, 2003

Local homeland security office backed

The Chairman of the House Committee on Judicial and Governmental Operations favors the creation of a local Homeland Security Division that will work hand-in-hand with the national department in the defense against terrorism. Rep. Martin B. Ada told reporters yesterday that the cost of running the division, based on the proposal by Homeland Security Special Advisor Jerry Crisostomo, is less than half-a-million dollars.

DPS crafting plans to protect tourists

Police Commissioner Edward Camacho disclosed plans to regulate tourist areas to deter the continued rise in crimes perpetrated against visitors. Camacho said a comprehensive plan is now being mapped out on effectively putting a stop to crimes against tourists, which noticeably occur in beach areas and other tourist spots.

DLNR loosens embargo on chicken imports

More than three months after banning the entry of birds and poultry coming from the U.S. mainland due to the West Nile virus scare, the Department of Lands and Natural Resources modified the emergency regulation to allow the entry of chickens over four weeks old into the CNMI. Before this, DLNR Secretary Tom Pangelinan declared that only hatched chicken eggs and day-old chicks could enter the Commonwealth. The embargo does not apply to birds and poultry originating from Guam, except when the virus is actually detected.

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

SCC's Team Captains' meeting

The Team Captains' meeting for the Saipan Chamber of Commerce's 2008 Corporate Cultural Challenge will be held on Tuesday, Feb. 5, 3pm, at the Chamber office. There are still some openings available, so if you haven't signed up your team, do it now! ***(PR)***

Trails and Parks meeting set

There will be a Trails & Parks meeting on Feb. 7 at 2pm at the Resource Conservation & Development office. The RC&D office is on Beach Road on the first floor of the D.Y. Building with the coral reef banner out front. If it gets too large, the meeting will move next door to the NRCS office conference room.

"I hope to see you there, since anything, we do to improve our environment and ecotourism on this island will benefit everyone," said Ken Kramer, Marianas RC&D coordinator. ***(PR)***

Reach Out Pacific gives to CNMI schools

HONOLULU, Hawaii—Fifteen boxes of teaching manuals and 12 boxes of children's clothing headed to Saipan yesterday as part of donations made by Reach Out Pacific, or REPAC.

REPAC is a Hawaii non-profit organization that sends educational and medical supplies to Micronesia, is coordinating the donation.

The books being sent to the CNMI's Public School System include a variety of instructional materials for elementary school teachers. They cover a number of subjects including: English (spelling, grammar, literature, etc.), science and math lesson plans, teaching strategies and extension plans.

"After an outpouring of donations from local schools, teachers and students, we realized we had the opportunity to share some of our valuable resources with other educational institutions," said Tamara Martinez, Hawaii Literacy program manager. "It is wonderful to know these materials are soon going to be used to teach children on Saipan. We hope this won't be the last time we are able to contribute needed books to our Micronesian *ohana* [extended family]."

The donation also includes extra clothing from Shriner's Hospital. The dozen boxes will be given to children throughout the Commonwealth.

"These gifts will benefit hundreds of our students," said Education Commissioner David Borja, "The donation will enhance teaching in our classrooms and improve the self-esteem of some of our students whose parents are struggling in the CNMI."

The items are being packed and shipped by Triple B Forwarders. "We are delighted to get these items into the hands of needy children. We are committed to improving life throughout the Pacific," said Andrew Alt, Triple B Forwarders.

This is the second donation by REPAC to Saipan. In the summer of 2006, the organization donated wheelchairs, crutches, orthopedic shoes, and walkers to the Commonwealth Health Center.

REPAC was established in 2004 and is a part of the Association of Pacific Island Legislatures, of which the Hawaii legislature holds membership.

REPAC has sent surplus medical and educational supplies to Samoa, Chuuk, Yap, Kosrae, Pohnpei, Palau, Guam, and Saipan. ***(REPAC)***

Guam Air Guard to host Enlisted Awards Banquet ceremony

GUAM—The Guam Air National Guard is scheduled to hold their 2008 Enlisted Awards Banquet ceremony Feb. 2 at the Hilton Resort and Spa Marianas Ballroom.

The award ceremony recognizes airmen who have been nominated as Airmen of the Year, Non-commissioned Officer of the Year and Senior NCO of the Year. In addition, there will also be a First Sergeant Category.

Last year, Senior Airman Maria Ronquillo, 254th Security Forces Squadron, won the Airman of the Year category nationally. She competed with members of the Air National Guard and Air Force across the nation. She also won the USO Guard member of the Year in 2007.

This year's guest speaker is the Air National Guard's Command Chief Master Sgt. Richard A. Smith.

This award recognizes 12 outstanding enlisted personnel for superior leadership, job performance, community involvement, and personal achievements. AFA honors the 12 Outstanding Airmen at its annual convention in Washington, D.C.

The program was initiated at the Air Force Association's 10th annual national Conference, held in New Orleans in 1956.

The 12 Outstanding Airmen are awarded the Outstanding Airman ribbon with the bronze service star device and wear the Outstanding Airman badge for one year. They also serve on the Air Force Enlisted Council for one year. ***(PR)***

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ASIAN ISLAND	V004	2/8 FRI	2/9 SAT	2/14 THU	2/16 SAT	SKIP	2/20 WED	2/23 SAT	2/26 TUE
STADT HAMBURG	V012	2/15 FRI	2/16 SAT	2/21 THU	2/23 SAT	2/26 TUE	2/27 WED	3/1 SAT	3/4 TUE
TO BE ANNOUNCED	V016	2/22 FRI	2/23 SAT	2/28 THU	3/1 SAT	SKIP	3/5 WED	3/8 SAT	3/11 TUE
ASIAN ISLAND	V005	2/29 FRI	3/1 SAT	3/6 THU	3/8 SAT	3/11 TUE	3/12 WED	3/15 SAT	3/18 TUE
STADT HAMBURG	V013	3/7 FRI	3/8 SAT	3/13 THU	3/15 SAT	SKIP	3/19 WED	3/22 SAT	3/25 TUE
TO BE ANNOUNCED	V017	3/14 FRI	3/15 SAT	3/20 THU	3/22 SAT	3/25 TUE	3/26 WED	3/29 SAT	4/1 TUE
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Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
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EDITORIAL

A day to remember

On April 12, 1861, Confederate forces opened fire on Fort Sumter, a federal fort in the mouth of Charleston Harbor in South Carolina. Those first shots of the Civil War energized secessionists and codified this nation's founding rift: the political and moral divide between those who owned slaves and those who would not abide the institution of slavery. It was the men of South Carolina who fired those shots and started the war that would define the United States and its young president from Illinois, one Abraham Lincoln.

On Saturday, descendants of those men and their families cast their votes, in overwhelming numbers, for a young senator from Illinois, for the first black man with a realistic opportunity to be elected president of the union that Lincoln saved.

It was, of course, a significant moment for Barack Obama and his passionate supporters. Backers of Hillary Rodham Clinton had spent all day bracing for it. "Regardless of today's outcome ...," began one telling Clinton camp e-mail sent Saturday morning. But rather than parse the political advantage that Obama has gained with his victory—and it is the first time this primary season, one should note, that any Democratic candidate has won a straight majority in any contested state—we took a moment Sunday to reflect on what it suggests about America.

We are, it is often said, a young nation. Less than 150 years ago—the blink of a European eye—our forebears raised arms against one another and millions fell, slaughtered in conflict over the place of blacks in American society. Those slaves had arrived here in chains, families and lives sundered. Once freed by Lincoln, they were cast into a hostile land, where they lived for another century until a new and great generation of Americans—the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., Malcolm X, Earl Warren and, yes, Lyndon Johnson—helped set them free.

For two weeks now, we have been forced to endure a restrained but tiresome debate over the perennial questions of race in politics, over who deserves how much credit for liberating the descendants of slaves. The answer is that many good and brave souls acted, but even their actions were not enough until their work lodged in the hearts of those less brave, less foresighted.

On Saturday, black men and women stood beside whites and a smattering of Hispanics as a black man accepted South Carolina's Democratic nomination for president. "This election," Obama told a cheering crowd in the Confederacy's cradle, "is about the past versus the future." Whatever one thinks about Obama and Clinton, whether one is a Republican or a Democrat, that is a moment to treasure in our short history, a history marked by the pursuit of a perfected nation, where all are created equal.

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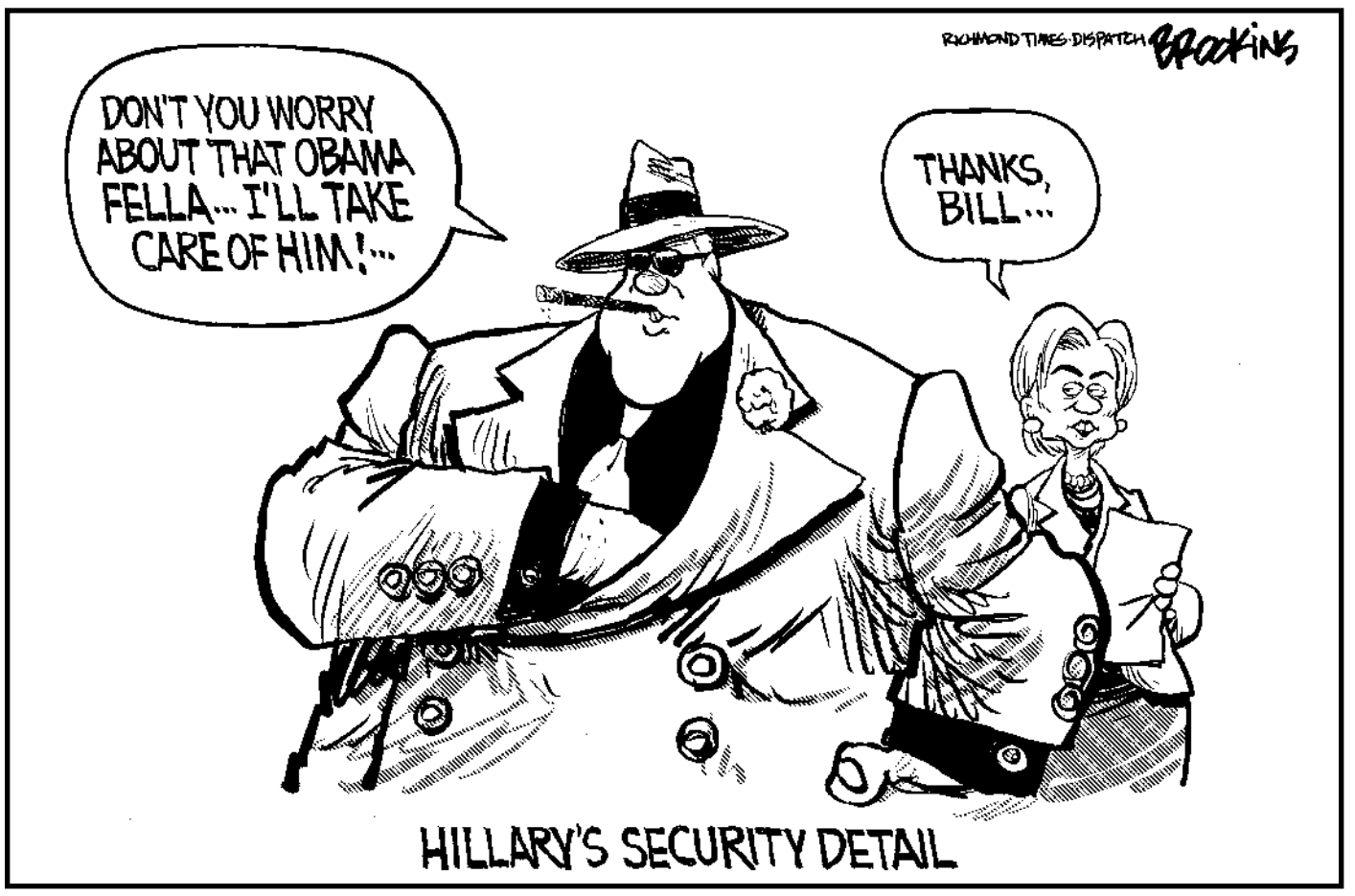
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HILLARY'S SECURITY DETAIL

New York: The good, the bad, the unnecessary roughness

The only way to take control of your life, raise your standard of living and move beyond merely surviving is to create your own unique product or service that you offer to increasing numbers of people in exchange for the things of value that you desire. This simple formula applies to countries as well as people. A self-sufficient economy has its own products or services of value to export to the world. Similarly, a self-sufficient individual has something of value to exchange in the global marketplace. That thing of value is based on your natural talent, skill, or interest—in other words, your passion!

THE SAIPANPRENEUR PROJECT *Creating economic success for the CNMI*

By WALT F.J. GOODRIDGE
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Send article suggestions, entrepreneur nominations and feedback about this article to walt@passionprofit.com.

Greetings from New York! Yet again I have occasion to be here for a few weeks to take care of some business. In the process, I've had the opportunity to interact with the police department, the court system, building managers, a host of financial institutions and various independent vendors, as well as engage in the usual activities one might expect during any such visit: driving the streets, reading newspapers, eating at restaurants, shopping in stores, etc.

Every encounter with the people and processes here is an opportunity to compare life here with life on Saipan. It was similar experiences and observations on a previous trip that inspired a few of my earlier articles "Profit and Paradise" and "Ten Commandments of Paradise*" (See* Saipan Tribune*: Wed, July 26, 2006, and Wed, Aug. 2, 2006, respectively).* This time around, the contrast is starker than ever.

First the Good.

New York is an entrepreneur's muse! During the first few days, to help myself integrate into the rhythm of the city, I flipped through television channels and saw dozens of infomercials advertising everything from power vacuums, real estate wealth strategies, male enhancement pills, subliminal weight loss CDs to Internet marketing DVDs. I listened to newscasts, podcasts, and radio broadcasts to get a sense of what was hot and happening in the world of business ideas. From an entrepreneur's perspective, these ads serve as constant reminders that there's an expectation of material success permeating the very fabric of the city; that money is being made, that products and services are being offered every moment of every minute of every day. I don't own or watch television on Saipan, so this was the first time that I actually saw many of these products and services.

My favorite concepts were the "Ask a Mexican" advice column I saw in the *Village Voice*, and the "Hip Hop Abs" fitness program, which both show a savvy use of niche marketing strategies, combined with a personal passion to create a unique business idea.

Yes, for those who are tuned in, there's no lack of unique ideas, inspiration and information on the airwaves, billboards and newspapers this side of the international dateline. The bar is set high here, and to compete, you've got to step up.

Now, the Bad

Of course, life in the big city also comes with higher levels of pollution, higher tempers, selfish driving, more apathy, general indifference, outright hostility and a general "me first, me last, and me only" attitude to survival and advancement. The bar is set low here, and to compete, you've got to step down.

Then, The Unnecessary Roughness

But the most striking difference I noticed, was what I call the unnecessary roughness of life here. Within the interactions with tellers, clerks and agents of various institutions, there's a clinical and cold tone that jumps out.

I'll spare you the gory details, but after discussing, dissecting, lamenting and laughing about some of my experiences with friends and family, I was able distill it into a single word: bureaucracy. As I write, I Google the term "bureaucracy" and chance upon a quote attributed to an eighteenth century author, Baron von Grimm about the bureaucracy of 18th century Germany: *"...here the offices, clerks, secretaries, inspectors and intendants are not appointed to benefit the public interest, indeed the public interest appears to have been established so that offices might exist."*

Similarly, I get the sense that I—as a customer, client or caller—do not represent an opportunity for the person on the other side of the call or desk to provide exceptional service, but represent a distraction and intrusion to an otherwise safe, uneventful, undemanding day's paycheck. As I wait on line, or in waiting areas, I listen to the interactions between reps and customers all day and come to the conclusion that the underlying tone of much of the interaction can be summed up in one phrase:

"I can't help you!"

To express it in a simple worldview, the underlying theme of many of my encounters with the bureaucracy here is "I can't help you." Even before I plead my case; even before I explain the details; even before I ask for what I need as a customer, if my case does not fit into the neatly prescribed box of "form 21A" I'm met with a confident "Sorry, I can't help you" or "We don't allow that."

But, I understand. This is New York. The sheer number of people living in this high-stress, high-density, high rent, highly uncertain environment—which increases the possibility of fraud and deception—reduces one's ability to make judgment calls on a strangers' legitimacy. Everyone's a stranger who poses a possible threat. Coupled with that, the litigious nature of the society in general, and

See NEW YORK on next page

EDITORIAL POLICY The *Saipan Tribune* welcomes comments on any article, column, editorial, or topic that may be of interest to the public. Letters to the editor must include the name, address, and contact number of the contributor. Letters that are critical in nature should focus on issues, not personalities. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, CIC Centre, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

Letters to the Editor

It is about the CNMI

First of, although I'm a few weeks late, I would like to extend my congratulations to the members on the 16th CNMI Legislature. While some of you are new, many of you have been in that office for many years and have played a great role in the shaping of our CNMI. Like the people of the CNMI, the newcomers will be looking to you for guidance in the daily operations of that prestigious office. Many voters, young and old, trekked to the polling station that hot day and placed their mark on your names. I hope you don't think that it is just that…a mark or a vote, nor is it just something to be counted. Those pen/pencil marking are indicators of the lives, the hopes and dreams, the desires and aspirations of those who are here now and the many that will be coming.

Speaking on behalf of those who supported me from north to south and east to west, I would like to remind you, young and old legislators, that we are no longer operating a virgin government. We have made many mistakes in the past. We are not human if we did not. But that is exactly why it is in the past. Let's not continue to stumble on the same rock. We are looking to you now, Mr. and Ms. 16th Legislature, to recall on the mistakes of the Past, so we can fix it now in the Present, and prevent it from happening again in the Future.

Secondly, I strongly believe that the crisis we are in now is a blessing in disguise. In the past years, we were the envy of many. But all good things can come to an end if we are not careful, and we have not been careful. As the world is round, we have been brought back to the starting point. We can't afford to let our egos lead the way now. We now need to sit back and appreciate what we once had, figure out how we were able to get it, what we did to lose it, and start coming up with ways to get us out of this grave and cover the hole so that we don't fall back into it again.

I understand that some traditions are addictions. We have an unspoken tradition/addiction here in the CNMI that is, many times, unspeakable. That is the "gatcha" tradition. Applied to you, this is when someone who is not part of your circle has a great idea that you feel in your gut can work or is worth trying, but because he/she is not in your circle or party, you go against it and or try to ruin the person in the process. But let me remind you that you, Mr. and Ms. 16th Legislature, are not the majority. The people sitting out here looking in, the people whose very lives you hold in your hands, are the majority. It is an honor to be placed on that pedestal, don't knock yourself off it.

Many of you had been given the chance to enjoy the pleasures of such a prestigious position. You are the seniors in that high school. Please don't forget that. Leave the playground for the elementary school students.

For you newbies, righteousness will lead you only so far and then you will eventually hit the reef. It is best to be adaptable to the point where you won't hate yourself. You have embarked on an important journey and in your sweaty palms you hold everyone's desires, hopes and dreams. I know you are eager to make changes and make your mark, but it is not about you. It will never be about you. It is and will always be about our CNMI.

You, Mr. and Ms. 16th Legislature, have a huge responsibility, and once again, the people feel that you are capable of carrying on that responsibility. It is not just the Governor's responsibility, but also, yours, mine, and every single person who lives here. It is our job to stand up for the land that we have been feeding off for many years. It is our job to lift the CNMI and place it on the very pedestal you are standing on. It is our job to serve our CNMI. Remember this as you contemplate the next bill that is introduced: There is no "I" in you, there is no "I" in me…but there is an "I" in the "CNMI." I know that, in our culture and tradition, it is disrespectful for me to speak to you this way, as many of you are older than me and many of you are my uncles and brothers, but I will carry the burden of your curse and anyone else's, in the name of our people, in the memory of our ancestors, and in the name of our CNMI.

In Dire Straits and Empty Plates

In dire straits and empty plates
A sinking ship taking fire from guns for hire
Covering each hole with pieces of our soul
A chant. A prayer. Cussing here and there.

Looking to our star to lead us far
Sailing despite a dim moon light
Our faith and belief will quell our grief
Our ship will sail. We will not fail.

To survive the ocean we must put our plans in motion
Sail through storms of different forms
Paddling hard and playing our cards
We will find many shores to rest our oars

Our forefathers will guide us through these stormy waters
They will help us soar and raise our oars
For In God We Trust…. and by golly we must
Lift our heads up high, reach for the sky and fight to save our CNMI.

Rose T. Ada-Hocog
via e-mail

Application for writ of habeas corpus

To Superior Court Associate Judge Ramona V. Manglona on Supreme Court Case No. CR-06-0046-GA (under advertisement) (Attention CNMI Bar Association):

My hope had greatly increased after I read in the papers your adjudication of the Marpac-Macabalo case a couple weeks ago. It was a classic example of my criminal case in which the jury came up with a "guilty" verdict even when there was no evidence sufficient enough to prove beyond a reasonable doubt that I committed the crimes I was being charged of; and the reason being that I did not commit any crime of any kind. My case was railroaded through a "kangaroo court," so not only was I denied of my right to a fair trial but I was also deprived of my right to be free pending appeal through the "Rule 38, stay of execution, and relief pending review" because my lawyer did not do it at my sentencing, although he knew it all along that we are appealing my case. My lawyer, Mr. B.S. Nicholas, dodged rule 38 and then he instructed me to go ahead and report myself to D.O.C. on Nov. 20, 2006 and in three weeks time he will get me out from jail through "Petition for release pending appeal" motion. At that time I did not know about Rule 38 yet, so I did what he told me to do. I learned of Rule 38 right here in prison. Also I am terribly disturbed by Chief Justice Miguel Demapan's statements of my "Appeal Hearing" last Aug. 21, 2007. He [Demapan] made some comments that were so unbelievable, coming the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court. This kept me worried as I am now awaiting the Supreme Court's decision on my appeal

Honorable Judge Ramona V. Manglona, that which you did in the Marpac-Macabalo case was what should have been done in my case in November 2006. But it was not done due to the fact that it was a kangaroo court.

So again, I was denied my right to a fair trial. I was falsely accused of crimes I did not commit, and then wrongly convicted and cruelly sentenced to 30 years imprisonment. And then to cap it off, my lawyer, Mr. B.S. Nicholas, deprived one of my freedom by dodging "Rule 38" even after I had handsomely compensated him days before trial began.

In anticipation of your much needed assistance in this regard, I thank you from the bottom of my heart. May God richly bless you and your family and a very happy New Year to same. In Christ, I remain.

Juan B. Camacho
c/o D.O.C. Saipan

Ironic

How ironic it is that, while the federal government as part of its efforts to stimulate the economy will be issuing tax rebate checks to U.S. taxpayers, our government here in the CNMI is deliberating on increasing the tax of those people making $60,000 and up.

Is this necessary? Especially given our economy that continues to go south? I strongly suggest that the government improve its collection of taxes first. There are indications of an underground cash economy that does not pay taxes.

What about closer monitoring of the poker machines? It is my understanding that, although there are supposed to be two locks on each machines so that the government gets a full accounting of the money in the machine, there is but one lock belonging to the owner of the machine. The owner may be an honest individual and reports correctly but reality says otherwise. How much is the government not realizing in just this industry?

What about collecting the millions owed the government by those that the office of the Public Auditor has identified as collectibles?

Additional tax on a few selected taxpayers is not a solution at all. First, how much is expected to be collected by this act? What are the possible consequences? Again, is our place that attractive for these individuals to continue to call the CNMI home? I would think one will begin to seek out alternatives.

I feel the solution is for the government to improve its collection efforts, hold everyone accountable and please, please cut back.

Efrain F. Camacho
Navy Hill, Saipan

Race-based screening

William Strand wrote with obvious emotion and distaste in reference to the medical screening currently taking place. No research on his part appeared to part of his letter. In other words, he jumped to conclusions and on the "let's bash the indigenous people" bandwagon.

Is race based medical screening is bad? Different races and the sexes have different medical issues. Did you know that white males are six times more likely to develop testicular cancer than black males? Many medical issues are prevalent in some races and not in others. How about sex-based screening? One woman in three and one man in 12 is affected by osteoporosis in the UK. The *American Journal of Gastroenterology* proposed that we should consider customization of screening of colorectal cancer based on gender, race, and ethnicity.

Then there is the issue of funding for the screening—and some funding is tied to who the screening is supposed to assist, which is the norm in the United States.

I do not know who the screening was paid for by, nor do I know if the screened medical issues are more prevalent in Northern Marianas natives than other races, and certainly William Strand does not either, which is the bigger problem. His obvious disgust towards indigenous Northern Marianas natives has no basis in fact, which seems to be the disturbing norm these days.

William "Bamboo" McCue
Wellington, FL

NEW YORK

From Page 10

the consequences of making a mistake ("I'll lose my job or get sued if I'm wrong") makes it unwise, and unsafe for a clerk to go above and beyond his/her basic job description to provide truly exceptional service. Of course, there were exceptions, usually in the outlying regions of New York further away from ground zero.

But, by and large, few people will stick their necks out to facilitate a transaction or special request ("sorry, I can't help you"). In addition, few people in this sort of bureaucracy even know the names and identities of their fellow employees in other departments ("I'll have to transfer you to the legal department for that, sir").

"I can't help you. If the telephone bill you're using for secondary proof of address reads "Walt JF Goodridge" and not "Walt FJ Goodridge," then I'm sorry I can't help you."

"I can't help you. If what you're requesting is not explicitly allowed and described with instructions in my job manual, I can't help you."

In other words: "I can't help you unless I'm sure. I can't be sure unless I follow the written rules. If it's not in the written rules, then I'm not free to make any judgment calls based on human interaction, emotion, decency, expediency, or common sense, because if I make a mistake, you will sue me or I will get fired. So, I'm afraid I cannot and will not help you…..NEXT!"

People cling to what is safe. People cling to what they know. People find their power and security in what they can be sure of. They may not know how to really help in ways that are kind and humane, but they know they can confidently say "no" if any "t" is not crossed, or if any "i" is not dotted. That is a source of certainty and thus confidence. And in the fast-paced, high-pressure, chaotic, litigious, uncertain city that is New York, it is what people seem to cling to most. Of course, there were exceptions—bright spots of assistance within a drab landscape of apathy—and I've sent them letters of thanks and appreciation to help encourage that sort of attitude.

But lest all of this sound simply like a rant of frustration (which indeed it might be), let me get to my point. The point is this. Ahem. I'll be heading back to Saipan in a few days! See you soon!

■ ■ ■

Until next week, remember, success is a journey, not a destination!

Walt F.J. Goodridge is author of 12 books including Turn Your Passion Into Profit. Walt offers coaching and workshops to help people pursue and profit from their passions. Originally from the island of Jamaica, Walt has grown several successful businesses in the US, and now makes his home here in Saipan. To learn more about the Saipanpreneur Project and Walt's philosophy and formula visit www.saipanpreneur.com and www.passion-profit.com

Sattelite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
Partly cloudy and breezy with isolated showers. East winds 20 to 25 mph.	Partly cloudy and breezy with isolated showers. East winds 20 to 25 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲81° ▼74°	▲82° ▼74°	▲80° ▼74°	▲81° ▼74°	▲81° ▼75°

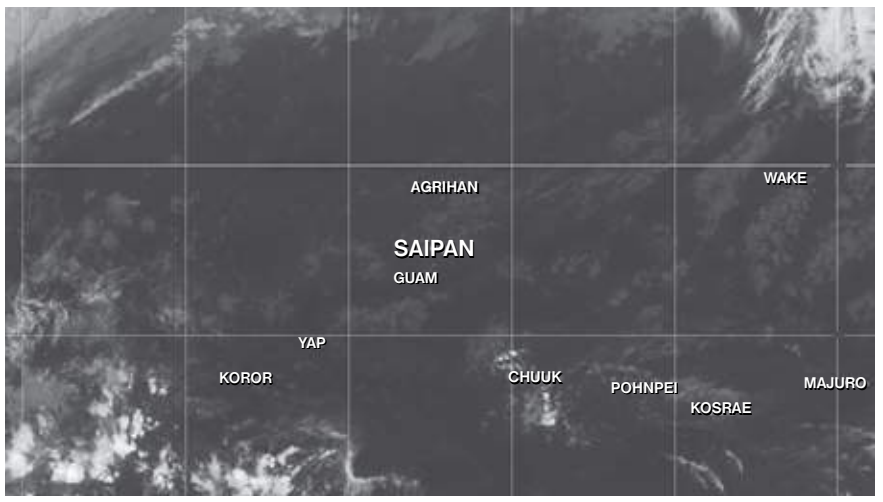
Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Mostly Sunny	▲85	▼75
Palau	Mostly Sunny	▲89	▼77
Yap	Mostly Sunny	▲88	▼77
Chuuk	Cloudy	▲90	▼80
Pohnpei	Mostly Sunny	▲86	▼76
Kosrae	Mostly Sunny	▲88	▼77
Majuro	Cloudy	▲84	▼76

Around The Globe

Auckland	Partly Sunny	▲75	▼64
Beijing	Sunny	▲32	▼16
Hong Kong	Showers	▲59	▼52
Honolulu	Showers	▲75	▼69
London	Showers	▲45	▼37
Los Angeles	Mostly Cloudy	▲63	▼43
Manila	Mostly Sunny	▲91	▼75
Melbourne	Cloudy	▲86	▼63
Miami	Mostly Sunny	▲79	▼65
New York	Showers	▲42	▼28
Osaka	Mostly Cloudy	▲43	▼32
Paris	Mostly Cloudy	▲46	▼32
Pusan	Mostly Sunny	▲42	▼22
Rome	Partly Sunny	▲58	▼41
Salem	Mostly Cloudy	▲43	▼36
San Francisco	Showers	▲54	▼41
Seoul	Sunny	▲29	▼10
Tokyo	Cloudy	▲52	▼35
Washington, DC	Mostly Cloudy	▲50	▼30

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00PM, TUESDAY, JAN. 29, 2008
Western North Pacific between Equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

An old shear line extends southwestward from 24N164E through the Northern Marianas at 16N146E to dissipate well west of Koror at 7N126E. Extensive low-level cloudiness and scattered showers are found along and up to 150 miles northwest of this boundary. Another old shear line stretches southwestward from 24N163E to just south of Guam at 12N145E to dissipate over Yap near 10N140E. Patchy clouds and scattered showers are seen along and up to 100 miles northwest of this boundary. A surface trough reaches southwestward from 24N164E to 19N161E then turns southward to end at 8N164E. Scattered showers associated with this trough are occurring northwest of Wake Island within 50 miles of a line from 15N159E to 24N168E. Trade-wind convergence is generating isolated to scattered showers over Chuuk, Pohnpei, Kosrae and southeast of Majuro within 70 miles of a line from 9N148E to 3N167E to 4N172E to 12N180. More scattered showers are also present near and northeast of Tarawa within 50 miles of a line from 2N173E to 5N180E. Trade-wind convergence is also causing scattered showers and a few thunderstorms well south of Koror between the equator and 3N from 130E to 140E.

Tides

Saipan Harbor		
01:265AM Today	High Tide:	1.3 Feet
06:26AM Today	Low Tide:	1.0 Feet
12:28PM Today	High Tide:	1.8 Feet
08:14PM Today	Low Tide:	0.3 Feet

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:47AM	6:14PM
Thursday	6:47AM	6:14PM
Friday	6:46AM	6:15PM
Saturday	6:46AM	6:15PM
Sunday	6:46AM	6:16PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today		11:36AM
Thursday	12:46PM	12:16AM
Friday	01:38AM	01:00PM
Saturday	02:30AM	01:48PM
Sunday	03:24AM	02:40PM

GET YOUR PICTURES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS PUBLISHED—FOR FREE

The *Saipan Tribune* accepts for FREE publication the following:

PICTURES

- ISLAND SNAPSHOTS
  Birthdays, baptisms, christenings, family gatherings, reunions, club activities, and other community-related events.
- BIRTHDAY GREETINGS
  A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.
- BUSINESS
  Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.
- SAMU'T SARI
  Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
- TRAVELOGUE
  Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- COMMUNITY BRIEFS
  Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.
- CAMPUS BULLETIN
  Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

REQUIREMENTS

For pictures:

- Photos should be original and not copyrighted. Contributors must have the right to allow the *Saipan Tribune* to publish the pictures.
- Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).
- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
- Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
- For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.

For announcements:

- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and a phone number.
- Must be submitted no later than 12 noon to make it to next day's edition.

HOW TO SUBMIT

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- Fax: (670) 235-3740
- Mail: PMB 34, P.O. Box 10001, Saipan, CNMI 96950
- Drop off: 2nd Floor, CIC Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan
  To check if contribution are received, call (670) 235-6397, 235-2440, 235-8747

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- The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to accept or reject a contribution for publication; the right to edit all contributions, the date of publication, size of the picture, and page placement; and the right to publish contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats.
- The *Saipan Tribune* will decide how often community announcements are going to be published.
- For Travelogue, the *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to choose which pictures to publish.

NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any PTI cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

NEWS DESK For news tips, corrections and requests for news coverage, call (670) 235-NEWS (6397), 235-2440, fax 235,3740. E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com. Website:www.saipantribune.com.

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ADVERTISING For inquiries contact 235-2769. E-mail: sales@saipantribune.com

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JANUARY 29, 2008

DEPARTURES

Saipan-Guam			
CO9317	5:00am	5:50am	1,2,4,5,6,7
CO9597	8:30am	9:20am	1,2,5,6
CO9313	8:30am	10:00am	3,4,7 via Rota
CO9601	12:30pm	1:20pm	Daily
CO9603	3:30pm	4:20pm	Daily
CO9605	6:30pm	7:20pm	Daily
CO9599	9:30pm	10:20pm	2,3,4,5,6,7
Saipan-Seoul			
OZ 604	2:10am	6:00am	1
OZ 604	2:40am	6:30am	2,3,4,5,6,7
OZ 606	3:30pm	7:00pm	2,4,6,7
Saipan-Busan			
OZ 608	4:00am	7:35am	1,4,5,7
Guam-Manila			
CO 891	6:00am	10:30am	3 via Yap and Koror
CO 893	6:30am	8:05am	6
CO 893	8:25am	10:00am	2
CO 893	5:50pm	9:10pm	5 via Koror
CO 933	8:00pm	9:40pm	Daily
PR 111	6:00am	7:45am	1,2,4,6,7
Saipan-Manila			
CO 895	4:45pm	6:35pm	6
CO 895	6:45pm	8:35pm	3
Saipan-Nagoya			
NW 078	8:30am	11:10am	Daily
Saipan-Narita			
NW 078	8:30am	1:30pm	Daily via Nagoya
NW 075	4:55pm	7:30pm	Daily
Saipan-Osaka			
NW 083	4:30pm	7:25pm	Daily
Saipan-Beijing			
CA 988	3:15am	7:00am	1,5
Saipan-Shanghai			
MU 590	4:20am	7:00am	2,6
Guam-Hongkong			
CO 910	7:45pm	10:40pm	1,5
Saipan-Guanzhou			
CZ 3008	5:00am	8:00am	2,6
Saipan-Rota			
CO 9313	8:30am	9:05am	3,4,7
Rota-Guam			
CO 9313	9:30am	10:00am	3,4,7

ARRIVALS

Guam-Saipan			
CO 9316	2:30am	3:20am	1,4,5,6,7
CO 9316	3:30am	4:20am	2
CO9596	7:00am	7:50am	Daily
CO9598	10:15am	11:45am	1,2,6 via Rota
CO9600	10:45am	11:35am	3,4,5,7
CO9602	2:00pm	2:50pm	Daily
CO9604	5:00pm	5:50pm	Daily
CO9606	8:00pm	8:50pm	2,3,4,5,6,7
Seoul-Saipan			
OZ 605	9:00am	2:30pm	2,4,6,7
OZ 603	7:40pm	10:00am+1	7
OZ 603	8:10pm	1:30am+1	1,2,3,4,5,6
OZ 607	6:50pm	2:50am+1	3,7 via Busan
OZ 607	7:30pm	2:50am+1	4 via Busan
Busan-Saipan			
OZ 607	9:30pm	2:50am+1	3,4,6,7
Manila-Guam			
CO 894	11:20am	4:55pm	2
CO 894	7:45pm	1:20am+1	6
CO 892	9:45pm	5:25am+1	3 via Koror
CO 892	9:45pm	6:30am+1	3 via Koror and Yap
CO 892	10:10pm	5:30am+1	5 via Koror
CO 934	11:10pm	4:40am+1	Daily
PR 110	10:15pm	4:00am+1	1,3,5,6,7
Manila-Saipan			
CO 890	9:15am	2:55pm	6
CO 890	11:45am	5:35pm	3
Nagoya-Saipan			
NW 077	8:45pm	1:10am+1	Daily
Narita-Saipan			
NW 076	10:35am	3:05pm	Daily
NW 077	6:15pm	1:10am+1	Daily via Nagoya
Osaka-Saipan			
NW 084	10:40am	3:10pm	Daily
Beijing-Saipan			
CA 987	6:05am	1:55am+1	4,7
Shanghai-Saipan			
MU 589	8:05pm	3:00am+1	1,5
Hongkong-Guam			
CO 910	11:40pm	6:20am+1	1,5
Guanzhou-Saipan			
CZ 3007	8:00pm	4:00am+1	1,5
Rota-Saipan			
CO 9598	11:10am	11:45am	1,2,6
Guam-Rota			
CO 9598	10:15am	10:45am	1,2,6

(Editor's Note: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); CO: Continental; PR: Philippine Airlines; CZ: China Southern; CA: Air China; NW: Northwest; JO: Japan Airlines; OZ: Asiana. ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Guam-Rota			
FRE 100	7:00am	7:30am	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 100	7:50am	8:20am	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 200	9:00am	9:30am	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 200	9:50am	10:15am	Daily
Guam-Rota			
FRE 300	4:00pm	4:30pm	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 300	4:50pm	5:25pm	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 400	6:00pm	6:30pm	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 400	6:45pm	7:15pm	Daily
Saipan-Tinian			
FRE 101	6:45am	6:55am	Daily
FRE 103	7:30am	7:40am	Daily
FRE 105	8:00am	8:10am	Daily
FRE 107	8:40am	8:50am	Daily
FRE 109*	9:10am	9:20am	Daily
FRE 111*	10:45am	10:55am	Daily

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
FRE 113	11:40am	11:50am	Daily
FRE 115	1:00pm	1:10pm	Daily
FRE 117	2:30pm	2:40pm	Daily
FRE 119	4:00pm	4:10pm	Daily
FRE 121	4:40pm	4:50pm	Daily
FRE 123 *	5:40pm	5:50pm	Daily
FRE 125 *	6:00pm	6:10pm	Daily
Tinian-Saipan w/ connecting flights to Rota or Guam**			
FRE 102	7:05am	7:15am	Daily
FRE 104	7:50am	8:00am	Daily
FRE 106**	8:20am	8:30am	Daily
FRE 108**	9:00am	9:10am	Daily
FRE 110	10:00am	10:10am	Daily
FRE 112	11:05am	11:15am	Daily
FRE 114	12:00pm	12:10pm	Daily
FRE 116	1:30pm	1:40pm	Daily
FRE 118	2:50pm	3:00pm	Daily
FRE 120**	4:20pm	4:30pm	Daily
FRE 122**	5:00pm	5:10pm	Daily
FRE 124	6:05pm	6:15pm	Daily
FRE 126	6:20pm	6:30pm	Daily

Business

STOCK Portfolio

ASIAN MARKETS

AUSTRALIA
5,751.80
Down 134.50
(-2.28%)

HONG KONG
24,495.06
Down 441.45
(-1.84%)

JAKARTA
2,627.83
Up 45.78
(+1.77%)

TOKYO
13,289.64
Up 201.73
(+1.73%)

K. LUMPUR
1,380.54
Down 24.86
(-1.77%)

MANILA
3,224.24
Up 20.68
(+0.65%)

SINGAPORE
3,053.96
Up 12.90
(+0.42%)

SEOUL
1,634.57
Up 7.38
(+0.45%)

BANGKOK
749.79
Up 5.43
(+0.73%)

LEADING INDICATORS

DOW
12,383.89
+176.72

NASDAQ
2,349.91
+23.71

S&P
1,353.97
+23.36

MONEY MARKET

Australian Dollar	1.1273
British Pound	0.5041
Canadian Dollar	1.0047
Chinese Renmbi	7.1973
Euro	0.6772
Hong Kong Dollar	7.8048
Indian Rupee	39.39
Indonesian Rupiah	9331
Japanese Yen	106.605
Malaysian Ringgit	3.2365
New Zealand Dollar	1.2887
Philippine Peso	40.735
Singapore Dollar	1.4192
South Korean Won	947.3
Swiss Franc	1.0894
Taiwan Dollar	32.266
Thailand Baht	31.34

In U.S. dollar terms

Source: Associated Press

Lawyer sentenced in class-action case

Seymour Lazar, 80, arrives at Los Angeles Federal courthouse Monday, Jan. 28, 2008, in downtown Los Angeles. AP

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Seymour Lazar, who pleaded guilty in a lucrative kickback scheme involving class-action lawsuits against some of America's largest corporations, was sentenced Monday to six months home detention and two years probation.

He was also fined $600,000.

Federal prosecutors said Lazar, 80, was paid about $2.6 million to be a professional plaintiff and help the prestigious law firm now known as Milberg Weiss in its pursuit of the lawsuits.

The firm made an estimated $250 million over two decades by filing such legal actions, authorities said.

Three former partners at the New York-based firm are among the seven people who have pleaded guilty.

U.S. District Judge John F. Walter said he was outraged that a former lawyer such as Lazar could lie in legal proceedings.

The lack of respect for the court amounted to the "absolute height of arrogance," the judge said.

Lazar replied that he understood the concerns of the judge but felt that he has had sufficient punishment.

"I have been under investigation for seven or eight years and it has been seven or eight years of hard time and that is all I can say," Lazar said in court.

Lazar pleaded guilty in October to obstruction of justice, subscribing to a false tax return and making a false declaration to the court.

He could have faced up to 18 years in federal prison. As part of a plea deal, prosecutors recommended home detention because of Lazar's declining health and his age.

Lazar also agreed to forfeit $1.5 million.

His attorney, Thomas Bienert, previously said Lazar took full responsibility for his actions.

Stocks rise on rate cut hopes

NEW YORK (AP)—A jittery Wall Street advanced Monday, reversing some of Friday's sharp losses as investors took a dismal new home sales report as a sign the Federal Reserve will lower rates this week.

"Anticipation of another Fed rate cut is the main magnet in the market today," said Alfred E. Goldman, chief market strategist at A.G. Edwards & Sons Inc.

The Dow rose 176.72, or 1.45 percent, to 12,383.89 after falling as many as 95 points in morning trading. On Friday, the blue chip index tumbled 171 points after a two-day advance of more than 400 points.

Broader stock indicators also advanced Monday. The Standard & Poor's 500 index rose 23.36 or 1.76 percent, to 1,353.97, while the Nasdaq composite index rose 23.71, or 1.02 percent, to 2,349.91.

Government bond prices slipped as stocks rose. The 10-year Treasury note's yield, which moves opposite its price, was at 3.59 percent, up from 3.58 percent last Friday.

New home sales fall by record amount

WASHINGTON (AP)—New home sales plunged in 2007 by the largest amount on record while home prices tumbled sharply in December. Analysts forecast more trouble in 2008 as housing tries to emerge from its worst slump in more than two decades.

The Commerce Department reported Monday that sales of new homes dropped by 26.4 percent last year to 774,000. That marked the biggest decline on record, surpassing the old mark of a 23.1 percent plunge in 1980.

The government reported that the median price of a new home barely budged last year, edging up a slight 0.2 percent to $246,900, the poorest showing since prices fell by 2.4 percent during the 1991 housing downturn.

PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT

ANNOUNCING THE ASSIGNMENT AND TRANSFER OF THE LOAN PORTFOLIO OF 137 LOAN ACCOUNTS FUNDED FROM THE CONSOLIDATED LOAN AGREEMENT, BETWEEN THE NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION (NMHC) AND THE MARIANAS PUBLIC LAND TRUST (MPLT), FROM NMHC TO MPLT AND THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE MPLT LOAN PORTFOLIO BY THE BANK OF SAIPAN

The Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC) and the Marianas Public Land Trust (MPLT) through their management and respective boards, are pleased to announce the assignment and transfer of the Loan Portfolio of approximately 137 loan accounts from NMHC to MPLT effective December 31, 2007.

On March 20, 2001 MPLT and NMHC entered into a Consolidated Loan Agreement wherein MPLT desired to make available to NMHC funds for the purpose of extending home loans to low income or first-time homeowners. The agreement flowed from a legislative pronouncement from the CNMI Legislature and Executive Branch supporting such an endeavor. The MPLT NMHC Agreement constituted an Economically Targeted Investment by MPLT in which the social benefits which would result from the agreement were primary over the general requirement to maximize returns on investments by the Trustees, The consolidated agreement was an extension of the original loan agreement executed on January 23, 1998. The total amount of the consolidated loan and MPLT's investment with NMHC was $10 million dollars. The payments due on the consolidated loan from NMHC to MPLT were affected by the moratorium imposed pursuant to Public Law 12-27. As a result of the statute, the payments which MPLT would have been paying to the General Fund pursuant to the trust in the Constitution were to be withheld and applied as a credit toward the payments due from NMHC. Recently, this moratorium was ultimately removed with the repeal through Public Law 15-48 which required NMHC to once again start making payments on the loan to MPLT. Due to the financial obligations of NMHC it became challenging for NMHC to service the loan payments to MPLT given the financial situation of the borrowers.

After discussions and after consideration of the overall financial situation in the CNMI, it is the desire of NMHC and MPLT to compromise and enter into an agreement whereby NMHC would assign to MPLT the portfolio of borrowers, approximately 170 accounts, who received loans from NMHC with funds from MPLT's investment. With the assignment of debts owed to NMHC over to MPLT, MPLT will now administer the loan portfolio through a Loan Administrator, the Bank of Saipan.

Pursuant to MPLT RFP 2007-001, MPLT solicited proposals from all banking institutions for the administration of the loan portfolio it would receive from NMHC. The Bank of Saipan submitted its proposal, proposing to charge a percentage of the overall portfolio for its administration. Administration means that the Bank of Saipan will act for MPLT, receive all loan payments; impose the applicable interest rate on each account; credit all payments; provide statements of account to each borrower; review each account for any delinquency; make demands for curing delinquency; and consult with MPLT regarding proceeding with any foreclosure actions for delinquent accounts.

However, the MPLT Board of Trustees is pleased with the selection of Bank of Saipan as the administrator given its record during the receivership proceedings to take and rehabilitate a substantially delinquent loan portfolio and turn them into performing accounts. At the same time, the Trustees have found that the Bank of Saipan has assembled an experienced team led by Ms. Lee Francia and Marvin Deleon Guerrero whom are able to work with the borrowers to ensure that this Economically Targeted Investment continues to provide the benefits to our community until the loans are satisfied. The Trustees are also considering other possible ways to assist the borrowers in the portfolio to succeed in paying off their mortgages and avoid delinquency including work-out plans and possible reductions in the mortgage interest rates. The Bank of Saipan is committed to this investment with MPLT.

Notices of Assignment are being sent to those borrowers whose accounts have been assigned from NMHC to MPLT. However, not all NMHC accounts have been assigned. Specifically, USDA Rural Housing Development Loan -Recipients; those whose accounts are with BankPacific; and those whose accounts are with the Bank of Hawaii will continue to make payment to NMHC or to each banking institution.

For the MPLT Portfolio, effective February 1st, borrowers will be able to make their payments at the Bank of Saipan branches on Saipan, Tinian and Rota. Portfolio members may contact the Bank of Saipan and confer with Mr. Marvin Deleon Guerrero if they have any questions regarding their account.

Nation

Bush urges econ action, Iraq patience

WASHINGTON (AP)—President Bush, standing before Congress one last time, urged the nation Monday night to persevere against gnawing fears of recession and stay patient with the long, grinding war in Iraq. He pressed Congress to quickly pass a plan to rescue the economy.

"We can all see that growth is slowing," Bush said in a blunt acknowledgment of rising food and gas prices, increasing unemployment and turmoil in the housing and financial markets.

He cautioned against accelerating U.S. troop withdrawals from Iraq, saying that would jeopardize progress achieved over the past year. He said plans already are set for 20,000 troops to come home.

It was his final State of the Union address and he faced a hostile, Democratic-led Congress eager for the end of his term next January. He scolded lawmakers for slipping costly, special-interest projects into bills and promised to use his veto pen to cut them.

With his approval rating near its all-time low, Bush lacked the political clout to push bold ideas and he didn't try. He called on lawmakers to urgently approve a $150 billion plan - worked out with House leaders - to avoid or soften any recession through tax rebates for families and incentives for businesses to invest in new plants and equipment.

"The actions of the 110th Congress will affect the security and prosperity of our nation long after this session has ended," the president said.

Senate Democrats want to expand the economic stimulus plan with rebates for senior citizens living off Social Security and extensions of unemployment benefits for the jobless. Bush said those changes "would delay it or derail it and neither option is acceptable."

He also pushed Congress to extend his tax cuts, which are to expire in 2010, and said allowing them to lapse would mean higher tax bills for 116 million American taxpayers. For those who say they're willing to pay more, Bush said, "I welcome their enthusiasm - pleased to report that the IRS accepts both checks and money orders."

He renewed a proposal to spend $300 million for a "grants for kids" program to help poor children in struggling public schools pay for the cost of attending a private school or a better public school outside their district.

AP

Vice President Cheney, left, and House Speaker Nancy Pelosi listen as President Bush delivers his State of the Union address before a joint session of Congress, Monday Jan. 28, 2008, on Capitol Hill in Washington.

Kennedy endorses Obama–'change in air'

WASHINGTON (AP)—Summoning memories of his slain brother, Sen. Edward M. Kennedy led two generations of the First Family of Democratic politics Monday in endorsing Barack Obama for the White House, declaring, "I feel change is in the air."

Obama is a man of rare "grit and grace," Kennedy said in remarks salted with scarcely veiled criticism of the Illinois senator's chief rival for the presidential nomination, Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton, as well as her husband, the former president.

Obama beamed as first Rhode Island Rep. Patrick Kennedy, then Caroline Kennedy, and finally the country's best known liberal took turns bestowing their praise. "Today isn't just about politics for me. It's personal," Obama told a boisterous crowd packed into the American University basketball arena a few miles across town from the White House.

It was also about politics, though, and a rapidly approaching set of primaries and caucuses across 24 states on Feb. 5, with more than 1,600 national convention delegates at stake.

Kennedy's endorsement was ardently sought by all three of the remaining Democratic presidential contenders, and he delivered it at a pivotal time in the race. A liberal lion in his fifth decade in the Senate, the Massachusetts senator is in a position to help Obama court voting groups who so far have tilted Clinton's way. These include Hispanics, rank-and-file union workers and lower-income, older voters.

Cash-strapped states resort to odd taxes

ALBANY, N.Y. (AP)—It's the perfect tax: Government exacts a big payment without having to fend off lobbyists or wage a political fight. And in most cases, the taxpayer doesn't even have a say.

That's the allure of New York's proposal to tax illegal drugs, just one of the innovative—and sometimes odd—ways states are trying to raise revenue in these increasingly gloomy economic times.

Politicians love to use such methods because they don't have to raise income taxes. But critics say that's also the danger, if long-term problems never get fixed and essentials such as health care and education go wanting.

Need a few million dollars to fill a budget deficit? Lease a toll highway, like Indiana and Virginia did; or lease toll bridges as in Alabama; or cash in on future lottery profits as a half-dozen states are considering. You could slap a tax on pornography as six states already have, or tax strip joints like they do in Texas, where they call it a "pole tax."

Some states take a slice out of pumpkin sales at Halloween. And most states tax Shaquille O'Neal and Barry Bonds when they visit, using a "jock tax" on professional athletic events.

Amused? That will cost you, too. Many states collect an amusement tax for live performances.

VA links poor care to 19 deaths in Ill.

ST. LOUIS (AP)—Substandard care at a southern Illinois Veterans Affairs hospital may have contributed to 19 deaths over the past two years, a VA official said Monday as he apologized to affected families and pledged reform.

The hospital in Marion, Ill., initially drew scrutiny over deaths connected to a single surgeon, but two federal reports found fault with five other doctors.

The hospital undertook many surgeries that its staffing or lack of proper surgical expertise made it ill-equipped to handle, and hospital administrators were too slow to respond once problems surfaced, said Dr. Michael Kussman, U.S. veterans affairs undersecretary for health.

"I can't tell you how angry we all are and how frustrated we all are. Nothing angers me more than when we don't do the right thing," Kussman told reporters during a conference call after releasing findings of the VA's investigation and summarizing a separate inspector general's probe.

Still, Kussman insisted, "what happened in Marion is an exception to what otherwise is a truly quality health-care system" across the VA.

The VA will help affected families file administrative claims under the VA's disability compensation program, he said. Families also could sue.

The VA investigation found that at least nine deaths between October 2006 and March last year were "directly attributable" to substandard care at the Marion hospital, which serves veterans from southern Illinois, southwestern Indiana and western Kentucky.

ACROSS THE NATION

WWII vet, 80, likely next Mormon leader

SALT LAKE CITY (AP)—If leaders of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints hold with tradition, the next president of the church will be a soft-spoken World War II veteran with a love for telling stories. Succession to the presidency is historically based on seniority, and Thomas S. Monson, 80, is in line to succeed Gordon B. Hinckley. Hinckley, 97, died Sunday. Monson was one of Hinckley's closest advisers. Officially, the next leader of the 13 million-member church won't be elevated until after Hinckley is laid to rest at 11 a.m. Saturday at the church conference center in Salt Lake City. Church presidents serve for life. The title usually passes to the seniormost member of the Quorum of the Twelve apostles when a president dies.

1 dead in Calif. demolition accident

SAN FRANCISCO (AP)—A boiler at an abandoned power substation fell during a demolition project Monday, killing a worker, seriously injuring another and sending firefighters scrambling to free a third who was trapped. Crews were working to reach the trapped person, Fire Department spokeswoman Mindy Talmadge said. The area was strewn with debris, and about a dozen emergency vehicles were lined up. Pacific Gas and Electric Co. spokesman David Eisenhower said he could not immediately provide any details about the accident or the building. The power plant had recently been decommissioned, he said.

5 could lose jobs in NJ jail escape

ELIZABETH, N.J. (AP)—Guards did not search the cells of two inmates for more than two months before they escaped by chipping holes in cinder-block walls, prosecutors said Monday in a scathing report that could lead to the firings of some officers. Two corrections officers and three sergeants will face administrative charges stemming from the escape, Union County Prosecutor Theodore Romankow announced Monday. All five face possible termination. Romankow said the report did not make recommendations on punishment, but Gary Hilton, the jail's acting director, was more forthcoming. All five jail employees were suspended without pay Friday, and they face a hearing next week to determine whether that status will continue.

Archivist: I stole papers to pay bills

NEW YORK (AP)—A state archivist was charged Monday with stealing hundreds of artifacts—documents representing "the heritage of all Americans," according to the history buff who found some of them on eBay—to pay his household bills. Daniel Lorello, 54, is accused of taking the rare items from the New York State Library, including Davy Crockett Almanacs, Currier and Ives lithographs and the 1865 railroad timetable for Abraham Lincoln's funeral train. Authorities believe he hawked them for tens of thousands of dollars, using much of that to pay off his daughter's credit card debt. Lorello, an archives and records management specialist in the New York Department of Education, pleaded not guilty Monday to charges of grand larceny, criminal possession of stolen property and scheme to defraud.

Microwaved baby trial begins in Ohio

DAYTON, Ohio (AP)—Jury selection began Monday in the trial of a woman accused of killing her 1-month-old daughter by burning the child in a microwave oven. If convicted of aggravated murder, China Arnold, 27, could face the death penalty. Police investigators believe Arnold killed 1-month-old Paris Talley by putting her in a microwave at her Dayton home in 2005. Coroner's officials said the baby suffered high-heat internal injuries and had no external burns. They have ruled out scalding water, open flame or other possible causes of death that could have damaged the skin. Defense attorney Jon Paul Rion has said Arnold took the baby to the hospital after finding her unconscious and does not know how she died.

Detroit mayor's chief of staff resigns

DETROIT (AP)—Detroit Mayor Kwame Kilpatrick's chief of staff said Monday she is resigning amid allegations that she and the mayor lied under oath about an affair. In a letter to Kilpatrick that was released by his office, Christine Beatty said she believes she can no longer effectively carry out her duties. Her resignation takes effect Feb. 8. "I painfully regret the devastation that the recent reports have caused to the citizens of Detroit, to my co-workers, to the Mayor's family and to my family and friends," Beatty wrote in the letter. Kilpatrick spokesman James Canning said the mayor's office had no comment.

Asia

AP

Indonesian soldiers carry the coffin containing the body of former dictator Suharto at Astana Giribangun cemetery in Karang Anyar, Central Java, Indonesia, Monday, Jan. 28, 2008.

Ex-dictator Suharto is mourned, buried

SOLO, Indonesia (AP)—Tens of thousands of Indonesians mourned former dictator Suharto during his state funeral Monday, a striking display of affection for the U.S. Cold War ally whose brutal military regime killed hundreds of thousands of left-wing political opponents.

As mourners watched a motorcade carry the former dictator's body to the Suharto family mausoleum, many sobbed and called out the name of the man whose rule, though harsh, brought economic growth and stability to Indonesia.

"He was a great man," said Sumartini, a 65-year-old woman. "His death touched us deeply."

The former president died Sunday of multiple organ failure after more than three weeks on life support at a Jakarta hospital. He was 86.

Gunmen in Pakistan free school hostages

PESHAWAR, Pakistan (AP)—Gunmen held dozens of students and teachers hostage for five hours at a school in northwestern Pakistan on Monday, but authorities allowed the captors to flee without punishment to avoid bloodshed, a tribal negotiator said.

None of the hostages were hurt. But the standoff underscored the government's fragile grip on Pakistan's borderlands near Afghanistan, where crime is rife and security forces are struggling to contain rising Islamic militancy.

Kidnapping for ransom is common in Pakistan, particularly in the northwest, and police said the gunmen were criminals seeking profit rather than militants.

The mounting violence has contributed to the growing unpopularity of President Pervez Musharraf, who was on his last stop Monday of a European tour. After talks with British Prime Minister Gordon Brown, Musharraf insisted his U.S.-backed policies to fight religious extremism were working.

"I think we are succeeding," he told a news conference.

He also played down the kidnapping.

"It was incidental that those criminals entered the school," the president said. "It has been resolved peacefully."

Police said the half-dozen gunmen seized control of the school near the town of Bannu after a botched attempt to kidnap the government health chief from a neighboring district.

Police had given chase, sparking a firefight in which one gunman died and a policeman was wounded. The health official and two relatives abducted with him were freed.

The gunmen took refuge inside the school and threatened to kill the children, teachers and themselves if anyone attacked. So tribal elders started negotiations while armed villagers and security forces stood guard outside, said former lawmaker Shah Abdul Aziz, one of the negotiators.

In return for releasing the captives and giving up their weapons, the gunmen were given safe passage and left for an unknown destination, he said.

Local police and the government declined to comment on that report.

There was conflicting information on the number of children and teachers who had been held hostage. Aziz said there were 315 children, aged between 8 and 11, and 10 teachers. But local police chief Hamza Mehsud said there had been only 25 children and seven teachers.

Blizzards strand thousands in China

GUANGZHOU, China (AP)—Snow and ice storms have stranded hundreds of thousands of people—most of them migrant workers hoping to leave for the Chinese New Year—and more blizzards threatened Monday to wreck what for many is a rare chance to see family.

The government, scrambling Monday to prevent riots among the crowds that have swelled daily since the storms began Jan. 10, offered temporary shelter in schools and convention centers. Hundreds of police and soldiers were posted around the train station.

Frustrated in their efforts to return home, migrant travelers created small camps of suitcases in the mud outside the train station, scattering chicken bones and cigarette butts.

Li Moming, a construction worker among the 500,000 people stuck in the main southern city of Guangzhou, wore a mud-splattered pinstriped suit for a homecoming that might not happen. He spent the night on the street in a cold drizzle. The train to his village in central Henan province, 20 hours away, was canceled. He might have to spend the holiday at his work site instead.

"What can you do?" he said. "It's the weather. It's nobody's fault. You can't control the weather."

Chinese New Year begins Feb. 7—when the train station will start to sell tickets again, radio reports said. State-run newspapers ran headlines urging the migrants not to travel. But for many migrants, the New Year—China's most festive holiday—is the only chance for months to visit their families, and they stay away for weeks.

One young mother who would give only her surname, Yang, spent the night on the street in front of the station with her 7-month-old daughter. She said she would probably have to cancel her holiday visit with her family and return to her small apartment near her factory.

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands

Board of Parole

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PUBLIC NOTICE

Governor Benigno R. Fitial and Lt. Governor Timothy P. Villagomez, through the Board of Parole Office, and pursuant to Public Law 8-41, Section II of the "Open Government Act of 1992". Notice is hereby given that a **Parole Hearing is scheduled for February 07, 2008 (Thursday) beginning at 8:30 a.m., and, if need be, to continue on February 08, 2008 (Friday) at 9:00 a.m.** at the **Vicente Taman Seman Building, Department of Corrections, Briefing/Training Room,** Susupe, Saipan. The following items are included in the agenda:

I. **Preliminary Matters**
1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Presence of Quorum

II. **Consent Items**
1. Adoption of Agenda
2. Adoption of Parole & Revocation Hearing Minutes – July 24, 2007

III. Parole Application	BOP No.	Criminal Case No.
1. Dennise O. Reyes	08-001	06-029E
2. Francisco M. Tydingco	08-002	01-0320 (C)
3. Anthony M. Barcinas	08-003	05-0370T
4. Ignacio A. Cabrera	08-004	03-0381T / 05-0007T & 05-0215T

IV. Re-Application	BOP No.	Criminal Case No.
1. Jesus N. Dowai	08-RA-001	87-143

VI. **Adjournment**

If you have any question, please call the Parole Office at telephone number 664-3300 or 3302.

/s/ Ramon B. Camacho
Chairman, Board of Parole

January 29, 2008
Date

ASIAN BRIEFS

300 Afghans die from recent snow, cold

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP)—Some 300 Afghans have died in the past 10 days from bitter cold and heavy snow across the country, the Health Ministry said Monday. Officials said the dead included nomads who live in tents and villagers cut off from food and medical aid because heavy snow had blocked roads. Faryab province in northwest Afghanistan is covered in a 20-inch-deep blanket of snow, said Gov. Mohammad Omar. Afghan officials reported on Jan. 15 that 85 people had died in the previous days from heavy snow, avalanches and cold weather.

South Korea's Lee names prime minister

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—South Korean President-elect Lee Myung-bak nominated as prime minister Monday a veteran official with broad international experience to focus on achieving his goal of bolstering economic growth. Lee told a nationally televised news conference that he appointed Han Seung-soo, currently serving as a special U.N.-appointed envoy on climate change, to take the government's second-highest job. The announcement was Lee's first Cabinet appointment. Han has held a series of high-profile posts, including foreign minister in 2001-02, finance minister in 1996-97, national legislator three times since the late 1980s, and president of the U.N. General Assembly in 2001-02. Han, 72, was one of three U.N. climate envoys named last year by U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, also a former South Korean foreign minister.

Firebrand named Thailand's new premier

BANGKOK, Thailand (AP)—A combative veteran politician representing ex-Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra's interests was chosen as premier Monday, a move that could put him on a collision course with the military that ousted Thaksin in a 2006 coup. Samak Sundaravej easily beat the Democrat party candidate 310-163, taking a key step toward restoring democracy, but experts fear the election of a Thaksin supporter may further divide Thailand. Samak, 72, has made no secret that he is Thaksin's proxy. He has assembled a six-party coalition with about two-thirds of the 480 seats in the House.

13 killed in Philippine bus crash

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—A passenger minibus collided head-on with a truck in the southern Philippines on Tuesday, killing 13 passengers, including four children, police said. The minibus was carrying 20 people when it overtook another vehicle and smashed into the truck at a sharp curve along a highway in Carmen township in Cotabato province, police chief Inspector Reynante Gabico said. The driver and at least 12 passengers of the minibus were killed on the spot, he said. The driver of the truck, which was carrying 200 bags of cement, and his helper fled the crash scene but later surrendered to police, Gabico said. The passengers were on their way to Cotabato city to meet a relative returning from a pilgrimage to Mecca, Saudi Arabia.

SAIPAN ELECTRONIC DARTS ASSOCIATION
SEDA
SAIPAN ELECTRONIC DART ASSOCIATION
will be having their Captains meeting on
February 1st at 7:00 p.m.
2nd Floor Len's 5 Tavern
Beach Road, Garapan
All new and interested players are welcome.
Any questions please contact
Charlotte Tenepere, League Secretary
at Tel. 233-4397 • Fax 234-2747

World

5 US soldiers killed in N. Iraq

BAGHDAD (AP)—In a daring ambush, insurgents blasted a U.S. patrol with a roadside bomb Monday and showered survivors with gunfire from a mosque in increasingly lawless Mosul. Five American soldiers were killed in the explosion—even as Iraqi troops moved into the northern city to challenge al-Qaida in Iraq.

Iraqi reinforcements, along with helicopters, tanks and armored vehicles, converged on Mosul for what Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki pledged would be a decisive battle against al-Qaida in its last major urban stronghold.

The attack on the U.S. patrol—the deadliest on American forces since six soldiers perished Jan. 9 in a booby-trapped house north of Baghdad—raised the Pentagon's January death count to at least 36.

The toll so far is 56 percent higher than December's 23 U.S. military deaths and marks the first monthly increase since August. But the figures remain well below monthly death tolls of more than 100 last spring.

Tensions in Mosul, Iraq's third largest city, have spiked after the explosion last week in an abandoned apartment that authorities say was used to stash insurgents' weapons and bombs. As many as 60 were killed and 200 injured.

The unrest in Mosul stands in sharp relief to a significant decline in bloodshed most elsewhere in Iraq in recent months. The relative calm has been credited to a U.S.-led security crackdown—along with a Sunni revolt against al-Qaida in Iraq and a cease-fire order by radical Shiite cleric Muqtada al-Sadr for his powerful Mahdi Army militia.

But influential members of al-Sadr's movement said Monday they have urged the anti-U.S. cleric to call off the six-month cease-fire when it expires in February—a move that could jeopardize the security gains.

In Mosul, the attackers struck in the southeastern Sumar neighborhood, a middle-class district popular with former officers in Saddam Hussein's military and now a suspected hotbed for the insurgency.

Ethnic clashes spread in western Kenya

KISUMU, Kenya (AP)—Thousands of machete-wielding youths hunted down members of President Mwai Kibaki's Kikuyu tribe Monday in western Kenya's Rift Valley, torching homes and buses, clashing with police, and blocking roads with burning tires.

Witnesses described seeing two people pulled from cars and stoned to death, while another was burned alive in a minibus—the latest victims of a month of escalating violence triggered by a disputed presidential election. The death toll has soared over 800.

Kibaki has said he is open to direct talks with opposition leader Raila Odinga, who is from the Luo tribe, but that his position as president is not negotiable. Odinga says Kibaki must step down and only new elections will bring peace.

"The road is covered in blood. It's chaos. Luos are hunting Kikuyus for revenge," said Baraka Karama, a journalist for independent Kenya Television in Kisumu.

Pathologist admits to being self-taught

TORONTO (AP)—A pathologist whose expert testimony against people accused of killing children led to at least seven wrongful convictions said Monday that he taught himself pediatric forensics and was ignorant of the criminal justice system.

Dr. Charles Smith has a medical degree but admitted that he was self-taught in pediatric pathology, the field in which he was once considered a leader in Canada. Smith testified at an inquiry that his lack of formal training contributed to mistakes over two decades of performing autopsies in cases of suspicious child deaths.

Those mistakes included conclusions that several children were homicide victims when later investigations determined they had died of other causes.

"(My training) was self-taught, it was minimal, and retrospectively I realize it was woefully inadequate," he said.

Hamas helps Egypt to reclose Gaza border breaches

RAFAH, Egypt (AP)—Hamas militants joined Egyptian forces for a second day Monday in trying to restore control at three breaches in the Gaza border, building a chain-link fence to seal off one opening and directing traffic at two others.

Hundreds of thousands of Palestinians have flooded into Egypt unchecked over the past six days since Hamas militants blasted holes in the border partition. They have been voraciously buying up food, fuel and other goods made scarce by Israeli and Egyptian closures of Gaza's borders.

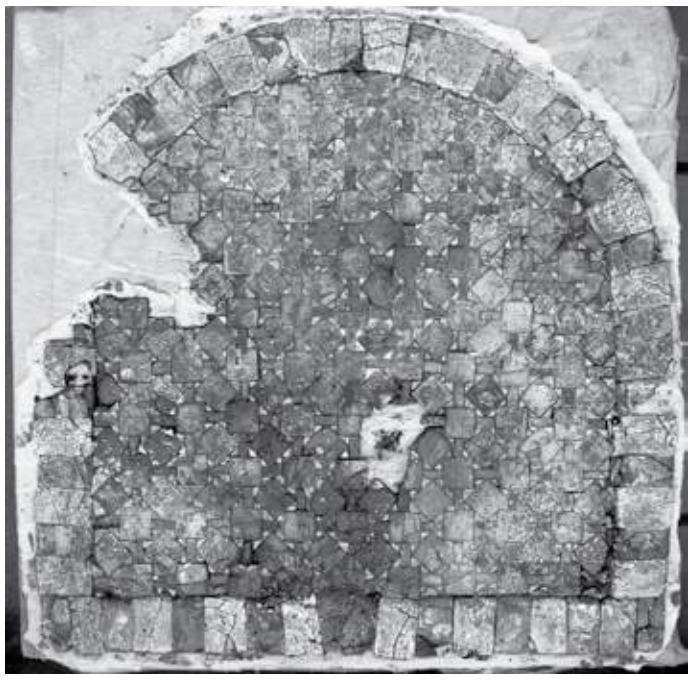
Hamas seized control of the Palestinian territory in June but before the breach, it had no role in policing the border with Egypt. Now the Islamic militant group is hoping that will change now and it is pressing for some kind of future role in border administration.

At a meeting in Cairo, Arab governments were forceful in their opposition to that idea.

Egypt and the foreign ministers of the Arab League have firmly backed the Palestinian Authority led by moderate President Mahmoud Abbas of Fatah in its power struggle against rival Hamas. They have called for a return to a 2005 international border monitoring agreement that excluded the Islamist organization entirely.

Palestinian boys, one holding a Palestinian flag, sit on the destroyed metal barrier at the border crossing with Egypt, in Rafah, southern Gaza Strip, Monday Jan. 28, 2008. AP

"They (Hamas) should not interfere. They should just simply get out of the way and allow this to happen," Palestinian Prime Minister Salam Fayyad, who heads a rival government in the West Bank, told reporters after returning from Cairo.



ANCIENT MOSAIC AP/ISRAEL ANTIQUITIES AUTHORITY, NICKY DAVIDOV

In this photo released by the Israel Antiquities Authority Monday, Jan. 28, 2008, a glass panel discovered in the ancient ruins of Caesarea in northern Israel, is seen in an unknown location. Experts have restored a one-of-a-kind 1,400-year-old glass mosaic glowing in gold, recovered from a site next to the Sea of Galilee, the Israel Antiquities Authority announced Monday.

WORLD BRIEFS

Israeli officials: Musharraf met Barak

JERUSALEM (AP)—Pakistan's president held a rare and secret meeting with Israel's defense minister in a Paris hotel last week, and the Iranian nuclear program figured high on the agenda, Israeli defense officials said Monday. The two states have no diplomatic ties, and their officials rarely meet. But Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf and Israeli Defense Minister Ehud Barak saw each other by chance at the Hotel Raphael in Paris on Jan. 22, where they both were staying, the officials said. They then held a scheduled 20-minute meeting the following day, the officials said. Barak and Musharraf discussed the possibility that Iran would develop nuclear weapons, the Israeli officials said.

Canada presses NATO for Afghan help

TORONTO (AP)—Canada will extend its military mission in Afghanistan only if another NATO country puts more soldiers in the dangerous south, the prime minister said Monday, echoing the recommendation of an independent panel to withdraw without additional forces. Prime Minister Stephen Harper's Conservative government is under pressure to withdraw its 2,500 troops from Kandahar province, the former Taliban stronghold, after the deaths of 78 soldiers and a diplomat. The mission is set to expire in 2009 without an extension by Canadian lawmakers. The panel, led by John Manley, a former Liberal deputy prime minister and foreign minister, recommended last week that Canada continue its mission only if another NATO country musters 1,000 troops for Kandahar.

Prison for aid workers in Chad kidnap

CRETEIL, France (AP)—A court sentenced six French charity workers to eight years in prison in France on Monday, after they were convicted in Chad of trying to kidnap 103 children they said were orphans from Darfur. In October, Chadian authorities arrested members of the aid group Zoe's Ark as they sought to send 103 children on a plane to France. The group's members insisted they were driven by compassion to help orphans in Sudan's conflict-wracked Darfur region, which borders Chad. But investigations showed most of the children had at least one parent or close adult relative. The six were sentenced in the central African country in December to eight years of hard labor, then transferred to France under a 1976 judicial accord between the two countries. They were jailed soon after their arrival.

Russia limits foreign election monitors

MOSCOW (AP)—Russia has invited only 400 international monitors to observe the presidential election in March, the country's election chief said Monday—half the number that participated four years ago. The announcement by Central Elections Commission chief Vladimir Churov mirrors a decision officials made in the December parliamentary election that was widely criticized in the West and prompted an authoritative vote-monitoring group to refuse to send observers. President Vladimir Putin—who is barred from seeking a third consecutive term—has named First Deputy Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev as his preferred successor. Putin's backing, plus the Kremlin's domination of most nationwide media, makes Medvedev all but a shoe-in for the presidency.

Campus Life

Burger chain offers 'McDiplomas'

The front window of a branch of McDonald's is seen in London, Monday Jan. 28, 2008. AP

LONDON (AP)—New on the McDonald's menu: a takeaway diploma.

The government is giving the U.S. burger chain—along with a rail company and an airline—the right to award credits toward a high school diploma to employees who complete on-the-job training programs.

The plan, announced Monday, is part of a push to improve skills among young people and offer even workers who dropped out of school years ago a chance to gain official qualifications.

It's the first time commercial companies have been allowed to award nationally recognized academic credits for their own workplace training plans. Experts and business leaders had a mixed reaction to the plan, already being dubbed "McQualifications."

McDonald's employees will initially be offered a "basic shift manager" course to train staff in everything they need to know to run a McDonald's outlet—from hygiene to customer service.

Railroad operator Network Rail and low-cost airline Flybe plan to offer even more advanced courses that could count toward vocational diplomas, or even university degrees. Network Rail is testing a course in track engineering, while Flybe is planning an "airline trainer program," which will cover everything from engineering to cabin crew training.

Depending on the course, successful completion would be the equivalent of passing the GCSE, the standard exam taken at the age of 16 in England and Wales, or the Advanced Level, the higher exam taken at 18. In Flybe's case, passing the training could result in a university level degree.

John Cridland, deputy director-general of the Confederation of British Industry, said the plan is "a significant milestone" in reforming official qualifications to better reflect the skills that employers seek.

However, the University and College Union said it was concerned the qualifications are too narrow.

"Just last week, a report revealed that some universities have concerns," said Sally Hunt, the union's general secretary. "We are unsure whether those institutions would be clamoring to accept people with McQualifications."

Prime Minister Gordon Brown defended the plan, saying that credits earned at each company would be transferable.

"It is going to be a tough course, but once you have got a qualification in management you can probably go anywhere," Brown told GMTV.

Dean Burn, a 20-year-old McDonald's employee who will begin a university degree in nursing later this year, agreed with Brown.

Burn said his on-the-job experience and in-house training at the fast food chain helped him get offers to study at two universities, even though he had fewer high school credits than typically need to enter a British university.

"I could give you 20 examples of how working at McDonald's has prepared me," he said. "There's the shift work, time management and people skills—within nine months I was promoted to management level."

Burn said colleagues who had been forced to drop out of school early for personal reasons and who believed that college had passed them by would particularly benefit from the plan.

"I think it's opening doors for people who can't afford to go through formal education," he said, adding that he would continue working part-time at McDonald's while pursuing his three-year college degree.

McDonald's plans to offer its British course to 7,000 restaurant managers across the country, regardless of their age.

David Fairhurst, a McDonald's senior vice president in Britain, called the program "an important and exciting step."

"We want to ensure that our approach to recruitment, training, and development continues to create real opportunities for social mobility," he said.

Steve DeWitt, senior director of public policy at the Virginia-based nonprofit Association for Career and Technical Education, said that "on the surface," the British plan "sounds like a good thing."

"In terms of technical skills and workplace readiness, the employer is really the best person to gauge what the student will need," he said. "But one concern would be, would it be a valid measurement of the academics? The business is probably not the best judge of that."

DeWitt said that vocational and technical education programs in the United States are taught by academically trained professionals for that reason, adding that none similar to the one in Britain had yet been implemented because of such concerns.

In the United States, McDonald's offers courses in restaurant management that can be transferred for credit at traditional colleges and universities through its training facility, Hamburger University. But a spokeswoman for McDonald's USA said there are no current plans to launch a high school-level program like the one in Britain.

Britain's skills minister, John Denham, said the government was recognizing companies that had shown a commitment to training and developing their staff.

"This is an important step toward ending the old divisions between company training schemes and national qualifications, something that will benefit employees, employers and the country as a whole," he said.

All three companies plan to extend their programs to offer more courses if trials are successful.

Ken Boston, the chief executive of the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, the regulator that approved the three companies, said that applications from other employers would also be considered.

CAMPUS BULLETIN

MHS Class of 1978 meeting

A class reunion meeting has been scheduled for Saturday, Feb. 9, 2008 at 9am at SNACK 'N GO, King's Plaza Dandan (across Joeten Dandan Building). For information, contact Liz Balajadia at 898-9535/Bernie Igisair at 483-0859/Terry Kisa at 287-5247 or Viola Guerrero at 285-1268. ***(PR)***

MHS Class of '88 reunion meeting

This is to inform the class of 1988 graduates of Marianas High School that there will be a meeting on Friday, Feb. 1, 2008 at 7pm at Melvin and Eleanor Cepeda residence in As Lito. This is to update plans on the upcoming 20th year class reunion.

"We are encouraging all classmates to please attend this important meeting for reunion day is just around the corner."

For more information, contact Lillian Lizama Tudela at 287-3742 or Dennis Villagomez at 287-4689. ***(PR)***

MHS Class of '83 meeting

Marianas High School Class of 1983 will be holding a very important planning meeting on Feb. 1, 2008, Friday, at 7pm. The meeting will be held at one of the pavilions at Kilili Beach, Civic Center, Susupe.

Numbers of the 25th Year Reunion Banquet at PIC will be finalized on this night for reservation purposes. Event tickets can still be purchased on a lay-away basis, so do not delay and don't miss out on your chance to catch up with the people you graduated with 25 years ago.

You may contact any of the Steering Committee members for details"

Tonnei Camacho, 483-9665
Viola Kaipat, 483-0214
Ed Camacho, 483-5262
Jane Tudela 234-9571
Frances Mildred Cruz, 483-0995
Ester Teregeyo, 285-6284
Ben Sablan, 287-1480
Diego Songsong, 287-4300

WSR February calendar of events

Feb. 1: ABE/GED Registration, 2:45pm-4:15 pm Room D-5

Feb. 2: TWEENS Talk, 8pm-4pm Hopwood Jr. High (By invitation)

Feb. 4-5: No classes (Professional Development Days)

Feb. 6: ABE/GED Registration 2:45-4-:15pm Room D-5

Feb. 7: Chinese New Year (Year of the Rat)

Feb. 8: WSR Walk-A-Thon (info sent out to parents earlier)

Feb. 9: DYS Parent Dev. Workshop

Feb. 11: Flag ceremony, 8am WSR stage

Feb. 11-24: WSR Read-A-Thon

Feb. 12: STUCO Meeting 2:35pm Room D-5

Feb. 13: Parent Advisory Council meeting, 6pm, Library

Feb. 13: Autism Parent Night, 6pm, WSR Cafeteria

Feb. 14: Valentine's Day

Feb. 14: 3rd Quarter Mid-Progress Report

Feb. 15: WSR Family Fun Night 5:30pm WSR Campus

Feb. 16: PSS Statewide Wellness Symposium (By invitation)

Feb. 18: Presidents' Day holiday (no classes)

Feb. 20: PTSA Meeting/Parent Literacy Night, 6pm, Cafeteria

Feb. 27: Half Day/Report Card Day

We are inviting parents to participate in the Autism Parent Night. Presenters from Oregon will be providing information on autism as well as answering questions.

Once again, the WSR PTSA is sponsoring a "Family Fun Night." Please come to the school and enjoy great food, entertainment, games and the company of our community. ***(PR)***

MHS calendar of events

Feb. 4&5: No classes (Professional Development Days)

Feb. 13: Midprogress Reports (distributed to students)

Feb. 18: No classes (Presidents Day)

Feb. 22: MHS Cultural Day (Regular School Day) Open to the Public 8:30-3pm

March 14: 3rd Quarter Exam (3rd & 4th periods)

March 17: 3rd Quarter Exam (1st & 2nd periods)

March 19-28: No classes (Break)

March 31: Classes resume (4th Quarter begins)

May 2: No classes (Intersession Day)

May 26: No classes (Memorial Day)

May 31: MHS Commencement Ceremony

June 3: Fourth Quarter ends

For questions and concerns contact 237-3206. ***(PR)***

WSR Elementary January events

Jan. 29: Spelling Bee finals, 2:30pm, WSR cafeteria

Jan. 30: Half-day (Teacher Professional Development Day

The WSR Library will be open from 9am to 4pm from Jan. 2 to Jan. 9. Students and parents are encouraged to come to the library and borrow books and use the resources. ***(PR)***

Essay and logo contest deadlines are extended

The Hafa Adai-Tirow Spirit Committee is holding a logo contest for all island artists and an essay contest for students grades 7-12. The deadline of submission for both logo designs and essays is Jan. 31, 2008 by 4:30pm. Submissions must be delivered to the Marianas Visitors Authority main office located in San Jose.

The logo contest is open to all resident artists of the CNMI of any age. Logo designs must illustrate the theme "The Hafa Adai and Tirow Way!", must incorporate the theme text, must work well in black and white, and must work well when reduced to 2.5 inches. Artists may submit as many logo designs as they wish. All submissions must include the name, telephone number and address of the artist. Logo designs must be submitted to the front office of the Marianas Visitors Authority, San Jose, Beach Road.

The essay contest is open to all CNMI students grades 7-12. Essays must address the question, "What can I do to show 'The Hafa Adai and Tirow Way!'" Essays must be between 400-500 words, be the original work of the student, and be typewritten on plain white paper or legibly handwritten on white lined paper. All submissions must include the name of the student, school, grade,, address and phone number.

Complete logo contest and essay contest guidelines are available at the Marianas Visitors Authority office, the NMI Museum Office, or you may contact Robert Hunter at telephone 664-2160/4 if you would like the guidelines faxed or e-mailed to you. ***(PR)***

Life & Style

An economy grows around Britney Spears

By JEREMY HERRON
AP BUSINESS WRITER

AP

Los Angeles Police Department officers ticket photographers for blocking traffic after they gather around a leaving vehicle carrying entertainer Kevin Federline outside the Los Angeles Superior Court in this, Jan. 14, 2008, file photo in Los Angeles.

In the days after the Britney Spears soap opera rode a police-escorted gurney to its apex, celeb-mag sales spiked, traffic jammed gossip Web sites, tabloid TV ratings rose and paparazzi photo prices surged.

For a growing number of people and businesses, Britney's saga is about money: Every time she sinks to new lows, cash flows. And these days, no one is above the fray.

When a custody dispute devolved into a three-hour standoff at Spears' home Jan. 3, police officers and firefighters were pressed into duty. Television stations sent up helicopters, and cable news anchors reported the unfolding drama in real time. The Associated Press had two reporters working the story, with editors on both coasts updating it seven times throughout the night.

Spears is just one of many stars driving the growing multibillion dollar celebrity news industry. But the Spears story in particular, with a new twist nearly every week, has become a very profitable sub-sector unto itself.

"Britney is the most bankable celebrity out there right now, and she has been for the past year," said Francois Navarre, founder of the paparazzi agency X17.

Spears became a can't-miss tabloid topic after filing for divorce from second husband Kevin Federline in November 2006. Since then, she's been in and out of rehab, shaved her head, revealed a bit too much above the hemline, was arrested after a traffic accident, and lost custody of her kids (and later her visitation rights).

"The product for the tabloid industry is the unusual, and Britney has been delivering that consistently," said Dan Smith, dean of the Kelley School of Business at Indiana University.

At a time when advertising spending in traditional media is declining, celebrity gossip titles such as Star, Us Weekly and In Touch Weekly are growing. That helped overall newsstand sales for magazines edge 1 percent higher, to $2.39 billion, in the first half of 2007.

"The increase is almost entirely attributable to the growth of the celebrity magazine," said John Harrington, who runs industry consulting agency Harrington Associates.

Any time a magazine can boost newsstand sales past its average, the revenue is booked nearly entirely as profit, Harrington said: "People prints 2.5 million copies and sells about an average of 1.5 million. If they have an issue that sells 2 million, the extra half million goes to the bottom line."

People, which takes a broader and less sensational look at the entertainment industry, dominates the sector in circulation, but that hasn't stopped such new titles as In Touch and Life & Style Weekly from elbowing in. Another newcomer, the U.S. version of Britain's OK!, has taken particular interest in Spears, putting her picture on the cover 54 times in the 103 issues since January 2006.

"An editor's dream is to have a real life soap opera unraveling in front of you, and Britney provides that every week," said Sarah Ivens, OK!'s U.S. editor. The magazine has a 10-person team in Los Angeles devoted to Spears coverage. "We're on constant Britney alert."

She wouldn't disclose the costs to the magazine, saying only that Spears has been "amazing" for OK!'s business. Publisher Tom Morrisy said Spears drives newsstand sales and helped the magazine's ad revenue more than double to $51 million in 2007. OK! expects to turn a profit in 2008, three years after breaking into the market.

US Weekly has been just as enamored of the star, putting Spears on nearly two-thirds of its covers last year, including each of the last 14. People has had Spears on the cover 10 times in the past 15 months.

And that heightened demand for Spears pictures has been a boon to photographers.

X17's Navarre said an exclusive shot of the star would sell for about $10,000 in the U.S. and generate thousands more in residuals. "She's the most expensive right now," he said. "For Angelina, for example, you divide by two or even three to get the price."

In contrast, the average celebrity shot fetches $125 to $700, according to Scott Mc Kiernan, founder of ZUMA Press photo agency. He said residual fees on exclusives can push the value of a unique Spears shot well past $100,000.

Many of those images wind up on celebrity gossip Web sites, like TMZ and PerezHilton. The sites make money by delivering viewers to ads on their pages, typically receiving a fee for each 1,000 hits. Navarre said Spears boosts traffic to his Web site, X17online.com, more than any other star.

"During the ambulance incident, traffic doubled every hour," he said, citing internal server data.

X17, which owns the infamous picture of a bald Spears taken in February, has a team of photographers tracking her at all times. "For us, she's the star No. 1," Navarre said.

Television ratings show that a major Spears incident attracts viewers to each of the main entertainment news TV shows, too.

"All of us sustained a major ratings spike" when Spears was taken to the hospital two weeks ago, said Charles Lachman, executive producer of Inside Edition. "It happens every time with her."

It's more difficult to assess the economic gain for TV shows because they sell ads weeks in advance, with rates based on average expected ratings. If the show fails to deliver, it has to reimburse the advertiser, but there is no such compensation if ratings exceed expectations.

Suffice it to say that advertisers love the extra attention. "Anything that boosts ratings is a win-win for everyone," said Shari Anne Brill, an analyst with ad buyer Carat USA.

On the flipside, the Spears story isn't making money for everyone. There are costs involved, too. For instance, the increased scrutiny puts a burden on Los Angeles civil service units, which have to keep Spears safe and public spaces uncluttered.

The L.A. Police Department wouldn't estimate the extra costs Spears generates. Her ambulance incident last week was handled by officers already on duty. The fire department said it was considering charging Spears for the ambulance ride, but did not disclose how much.

Spears' numerous court appearances—for custody hearings, divorce proceedings and a civil case—have more measurable effects. Richard Barrantes, chief of court services division of the LA County Sheriff's Department, said when Spears and Federline were in court on Oct. 26, his office billed the court $2286.10 to cover the cost of extra security at the courthouse.

The star's behavior may be eroding her own brand, as well. Spears remains among the most-recognized celebrities, along with Johnny Depp and Will Smith, according to Marketing Evaluations, the company that developed the "Q Score." But she is not well-liked. Her negative Q Score is at 66—only Federline has a lower one among all celebrities—meaning two-thirds of people who know who she is give her a "fair" or "poor" rating. The average for female performers is 30.

Spears, who used to pitch for Pepsi but no longer fronts for any mainstream products, gets most of her income from music sales, augmented by several perfume lines and other side projects. Elizabeth Arden, Spears' partner in the perfume business, introduced a third Spears scent, "Believe," last fall.

So far, Spears' antics don't appear to have hurt personal earnings, which, according to court papers released in November, are roughly $737,000 per month.

Spears has 'mental issues,' friend says

Spears

NEW YORK (AP)—Barbara Walters says she has been contacted by Britney Spears' manager and "very good friend," Sam Lutfi, who says the pop singer has seen a psychiatrist.

Lutfi told her the 26-year-old pop singer "is suffering from what he describes as mental issues which are treatable," Walters said Monday on ABC's "The View."

"He said that she has been to a psychiatrist and that she, I assume, is starting some kind of treatment," said Walters, a co-host on the ABC daytime talk show.

"She has been having mood swings. She's been having trouble sleeping, and also she is in touch with her mother—'cause we had heard she wasn't—and her mother has been very supportive of whatever it is that Britney is going to do," Walters said.

Lutfi has been staying with Spears constantly, "and he got in touch with us," Walters said. "I can't vouch for this, he seemed to be very knowledgeable and he certainly was very nice."

Spears' attorney, Sorrell Trope, didn't immediately return a phone call seeking comment Monday. Spears' spokeswoman at Jive Records, Gina Orr, didn't immediately respond to an e-mail seeking comment.

Spears has spiraled downward since filing for divorce from Kevin Federline in November 2006. Her bizarre public antics include shaving her head bald, attacking a car with an umbrella and bringing along a paparazzo pal on trips to a Los Angeles courthouse in her custody case with Federline.

The singer was taken to a Los Angeles hospital by paramedics earlier this month after police were called to her home because of a dispute involving her sons Sean Preston, 2, and Jayden James, 1. She has lost custody and visitation rights with the boys.

Spears reportedly has had a rocky relationship with her mother, Lynne Spears, whose book about raising her family in the spotlight was put on indefinite hold last month after younger daughter, Jamie Lynn, 16, announced that she is pregnant.

New season starts for Spears' TV show

LOS ANGELES (AP)—At least one Jamie Lynn Spears mystery is over.

The younger Spears sister's popular TV character is back at her fictional California boarding school, although the pregnant 16-year-old star of the children's show "Zoey 101" is continuing to stay out of the limelight herself.

"Zoey 101" concluded its third season last month, shortly before Spears, younger sister of Britney Spears, announced she was pregnant with her teenage boyfriend's child. The show has continued to air in repeats since then, with little fanfare from the network, leading to speculation that its fourth season might be shelved.

"The new season is under way. It premiered last night," Nickelodeon spokeswoman Marianne Romano told The Associated Press on Monday.

Filming of the show's fourth season, which was planned to be its last even before Spears became pregnant, was completed last summer.

The third season ended with a cliffhanger episode in which Spears' Zoey Brooks moves to England with her parents, only to learn that her longtime school friend Chase is in love with her.

The new season begins with another plot twist in which Chase (played by Errol Flynn's grandson Sean Flynn) persuades his family to send him to school in England, learning afterward that Zoey has returned and professed her love for him.

Spears, who once helped promote the show heavily, has kept a low profile since announcing that she is pregnant, and that Casey Aldridge is the father.

"She is on hiatus," her publicist, Holly Shakoor, said Monday.

Led Zeppelin guitarist wants world tour

TOKYO (AP)—Led Zeppelin guitarist Jimmy Page said Monday he was ready to take the iconic band on a world tour after burning up the stage at last month's reunion concert in London. But it probably won't be before September.

"The amount of work we put into O2 was what you would normally put into a world tour anyway," Page, 64, said of the intense rehearsing the band did for the Dec. 10 concert at London's O2 Arena.

The band's three surviving members—Page, singer Robert Plant and bassist-keyboardist John Paul Jones—were joined at the sold-out benefit show by the late John Bonham's son Jason on drums.

Page, who was in Japan to promote the new Zeppelin release, "Mothership," said the two-hour-plus concert was proof that Led Zeppelin can still perform at its best.

He said the band, which formed in 1968, was ready musically to get back together and take it out on a wider run, but it was not clear when it would go on tour as the singer had other plans.

"Robert Plant has a parallel project and he is busy with that until September," Page said.

Plant and bluegrass star Alison Krauss will begin their world tour with a run of shows in the southern U.S. this spring. The two released an album in October called "Raising Sand" that debuted at No. 2 on the Billboard chart in the U.S. The duo will tour Europe in May before returning for North American shows still to be announced for June and July.

AP

English rock band Led Zeppelin guitarist Jimmy Page poses for photographers during a press conference to promote the new Zeppelin release "Mothership" in Tokyo Monday, Jan. 28, 2008.

Page said the band set their standards very high before agreeing to do the reunion, their first in 20 years. Led Zeppelin broke up in 1980 after the elder Bonham's death.

Page said they rehearsed for weeks, apprehensive that the cohesion they had in the 1970s when they were at their peak might be hard to rediscover.

"We wanted people who might not have even been alive in 1980 when we finished to understand what we were," he said.

Page said all went well until he broke a finger in three places, forcing the band to postpone the show for several weeks.

"But we did the show, and it was great," he said. "It was instant in terms of chemistry."

Morrison endorses Obama for president

WASHINGTON (AP)—The woman who famously labeled Bill Clinton as the "first black president" is backing Barack Obama to be the second.

Author Toni Morrison said her endorsement of the Democratic presidential candidate has little to do with Obama's race—he is the son of a black father from Kenya and a white mother from Kansas—but rather his personal gifts.

Writing with the touch of a poet in a letter to the Illinois senator, Morrison explained why she chose Obama over Hillary Rodham Clinton for her first public presidential endorsement.

Morrison, whose acclaimed novels usually concentrate on the lives of black women, said she has admired Clinton for years because of her knowledge and mastery of politics, but then dismissed that experience in favor of Obama's vision.

"In addition to keen intelligence, integrity and a rare authenticity, you exhibit something that has nothing to do with age, experience, race or gender and something I don't see in other candidates," Morrison wrote. "That something is a creative imagination which coupled with brilliance equals wisdom. It is too bad if we associate it only with gray hair and old age. Or if we call searing vision naivete. Or if we believe cunning is insight. Or if we settle for finessing cures tailored for each ravaged tree in the forest while ignoring the poisonous landscape that feeds and surrounds it.

AP

Nobel Prize-winning author Toni Morrison accepts her Woman of the Year award at the 18th Annual Glamour Women of the Year awards at the Lincoln Center in this Nov. 5, 2007, file photo in New York.

"Wisdom is a gift; you can't train for it, inherit it, learn it in a class, or earn it in the workplace—that access can foster the acquisition of knowledge, but not wisdom," Morrison wrote.

In 1998, Morrison wrote a column for the New Yorker magazine in which she wrote of Bill Clinton: "White skin notwithstanding, this is our first black president. Blacker than any actual black person who could ever be elected in our children's lifetime. After all, Clinton displays almost every trope of blackness: single-parent household, born poor, working-class, saxophone-playing, McDonald's-and-junk-food-loving boy from Arkansas."

Obama responded to Morrison's endorsement with a written statement: "Toni Morrison has touched a nation with the grace and beauty of her words, and I was deeply moved and honored by the letter she wrote and the support she is giving our campaign."

Mao Zedong's English tutor is dead at 72

By AUDRA ANG
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

BEIJING (AP)—Zhang Hanzhi, Mao Zedong's English tutor and an interpreter during the historic 1972 meeting between the Communist leader and President Nixon, has died. She was 72.

Zhang died Saturday in Beijing from a lung-related illness, state media reported without giving details. She will be buried in the capital's Babaoshan Revolutionary Cemetery, an honor given to the Communist Party's elite.

"I want everyone to remember her smile, her loyalty to love, her kindness of heart and how grandiose she was. Remember her brilliant life," Zhang's daughter, Hong Huang, a well-known publisher, wrote in her blog. "Mother ... we will still be together."

Born in Shanghai in 1935, Zhang was the illegitimate daughter of a shop assistant and the son of a prominent family. She was adopted by Zhang Shizhao, a well-known lawyer who had been involved in the custody battle.

Her family moved to Beijing in 1949 and four years later, Zhang entered the Beijing Foreign Studies University, where she taught at after graduating with a master's degree.

She met Mao in 1950 at a party to celebrate the first anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China, and again in 1963 at Mao's 70th birthday. He seemed relaxed and happy and asked to be her student when he found out she taught English. "Why not?" he asked, when she said she wouldn't dare.

"The Chairman wanted the lessons to start the following day! I was dumfounded," Zhang wrote in a 1999 article for Time magazine. "I was to teach the great leader whom over a billion people worshipped as their god?"

She described Mao as an ambitious student who was keen on vocabulary—especially political terms—and proper word usage, although he had no interest in grammar and correcting his accented pronunciations.

The pair formed a friendship where Zhang would update him on the latest happenings outside Zhongnanhai - the compound where Beijing's leaders live and work over dinners - where Mao would push her to eat his favorite dish of stewed fatty pork.

The lessons abruptly stopped in 1964 as the devastating Cultural Revolution began taking shape. Zhang and her family and friends were persecuted although she said Mao provided protection at various times.

In 1971, Zhang was transferred to China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, where she began her diplomatic career and attended a series of landmark meetings, including the ones with Nixon, when the countries began restoring tattered diplomatic relations.

She was also part of the Chinese delegation that was in New York in 1971, when the United Nations seat Taiwan held under the name Republic of China was transferred to the Beijing-based government of the People's Republic of China.

Zhang scandalized officials when she divorced her husband and married Qiao Guanhua, the head of the U.N. delegation, who was 22 years her senior. He died 10 years later.

Gee, ain't it funny...chatting with Willie Nelson

By J. FREEDOM DU LAC
(C) 2008, THE WASHINGTON POST

Iconoclastic country star Willie Nelson never wants for work. In between rounds of golf, he stays busy touring, acting, advocating, writing and recording. "Moment of Forever" (out Tuesday) is his third new album in just 15 months. It was co-produced by Kenny Chesney, who also sings with Willie. Nelson called from the road. Again.

Q. Kinky Friedman once wrote: "When Willie's not playing golf, he's mystical almost to the point of autism, which is not particularly helpful if you're trying to interview him." Is this interview going to be a disaster?

A. Which disaster are you talking about?

Q. You tell me.

A. I don't know. There's been a chain of those. (Laughs.)

Q. I can't even imagine what the backstage conversations were like when you and Dylan toured together. What'd you guys talk about?

A. We didn't really get a chance to hang out a lot. But he came on the bus a couple of times. Once, I was doing an interview with High Times magazine and he exited fairly quickly.

Q. What was your last conversation with Johnny Cash about?

A. John would always call me when he needed a laugh, because I was always telling him jokes. He called me just after June had died and we talked about how hard that was for him. I miss him and all the guys who have moved on.

Q. When you perform live, your against-the-meter phrasing makes it impossible to sing along. Do you do that so you don't have to hear your fans singing?

A. I like to watch them singing with me. But I trick 'em with the phrasing. I enjoy watching 'em stumble through a line that was supposed to go one way but went another.

Q. If you had to give up either golf or music, which one would you quit?

A. Since I don't have to really do anything I don't want to do anymore, I don't have to answer that question. No offense.

Q. Is it true that you bought your own golf course so you could play without minding the rules?

A. It's a lot easier if you own the golf course to make up your own rules. Like no more than 12 in a foursome. No breaking wind in the tee box. If you have a bad lie, you never have to tell a bad lie. I like that one. And par is whatever you want it to be—depending on what the bet is.

Q. What's an old outlaw like you doing with Kenny Chesney?

A. It turns out we have a lot in common and like a lot of the same things. He's a good writer and good singer, and he's good in the studio. He has a real good ear. I can see why he's successful.

Q. You've been pretty prolific lately. Shouldn't you be slowing down as you approach your 75th birthday?

A. I don't think that's a good idea. What's the old saying? Don't look back; somebody might be catching up. Well, don't even slow down, much less look back.

Q. Kinky was wrong. You're making a lot of sense today.

A. Well, it's difficult for Kinky to really know when someone is making sense or not. With all due respect—which isn't much.

Police won't question Olsen about Ledger

NEW YORK (AP)—Police Commissioner Ray Kelly says Mary-Kate Olsen will not be questioned by detectives about Heath Ledger's death.

"There's absolutely no indication investigators were going to speak to Mary-Kate Olsen," Kelly said at a news conference Sunday, echoing previous statements by police officials. "They determined that they had all the info needed from witnesses who were on scene: That's the cleaning woman, the masseuse."

Ledger's masseuse, Diana Wolozin, found his body Tuesday in his Manhattan apartment. She had an appointment with Ledger, who starred in "Brokeback Mountain" and other films.

Police have said Wolozin made three calls to Olsen before dialing 911 for help, then phoned the 21-year-old actress a fourth time after paramedics arrived.

At some point during the calls, Olsen, who was in California, summoned her personal security guards to the apartment to help, police have said.

Olsen hasn't spoken publicly about the calls. She has only said: "Heath was a friend. His death is a tragic loss. My thoughts are with his family during this very difficult time."

The cause of Ledger's death will not be known for at least a week, after medical examiners complete toxicology tests. Police have no plans to charge Wolozin; state regulators could discipline her if it turns out she did not have the proper license to practice massage therapy.

Authorities suspect a possible drug overdose, but nothing conclusive has been determined. Several prescription drugs were found in the Manhattan apartment where Ledger's body was found.

Actress Mary Kate Olsen poses on the press line at the premiere of "The Wackness" at the Sundance Film Festival in Park City, Utah in this Jan. 18, 2008, file photo. AP

AP

Lady Sarah McCorquodale arrives at London's High Court to give evidence for the inquest into the deaths of her sister Diana, Princess of Wales and Dodi Fayed, Monday, Jan. 28, 2008.

Sister: Diana feared being spied on

LONDON (AP)—Princess Diana feared her boyfriend's father was spying on her as the couple took a luxurious Mediterranean cruise, Diana's sister said Monday.

The princess believed the yacht she and Dodi Fayed were vacationing aboard had been bugged by Dodi's father, Mohammed Al Fayed, her sister Lady Sarah McCorquodale told an inquest investigating Diana and Dodi's deaths.

"She thought the boat was being bugged by Mr. Al Fayed senior," McCorquodale said, telling the court that Diana shared the concern during a phone conversation from the yacht. McCorquodale said she assumed the princess was talking over a mobile phone.

Diana, Dodi Fayed, and their driver, Henri Paul, died in Paris after their car slammed into a pillar in the Pont d'Alma tunnel on August 31, 1997. While French and British investigators blamed Paul for the crash, Mohammed Al Fayed maintains the couple was the victim of plot carried out by rogue intelligence agents and masterminded by Prince Philip, Queen Elizabeth II's husband.

Much of the testimony at the inquest has centered on the question of whether or not anyone was eavesdropping on the princess, and the nature of her relationship with Philip, her father-in-law at the time she was married to Prince Charles.

Earlier Monday, a British detective said a box allegedly containing letters addressed to the princess from Philip remains missing.

Acting Detective Inspector Roger Milburn said the whereabouts of the box, which he said contained correspondence between the two, remained "an unanswered question."

McCorquodale also said she had no idea where the letters had gone.

Grammys get interim writers union pact

LOS ANGELES (AP)—The striking Hollywood writers union said Monday it will let its members work on the Grammy Awards.

The decision by the Writers Guild of America's board of directors to grant an interim agreement for the Feb. 10 music industry showcase follows its move last week to withhold pickets from the ceremony to be televised live on CBS.

The union said it recognizes that professional musicians face many of the same concerns as writers when it comes to compensation for projects distributed via digital media—a central issue in contract dispute between the writers union and the alliance that represents studios.

Informal talks began last week between the union and several studio chiefs in an effort to resolve the nearly three-month-old strike. Formal negotiations with the Alliance of Motion Picture and Television Producers broke down early in December.

Snipes' defense rests in tax fraud trial

OCALA, Fla. (AP)—The defense in the tax fraud and conspiracy trial of Wesley Snipes rested Monday.

Snipes, Eddie Ray Kahn and Douglas P. Rosile were named in an eight-count indictment. Snipes and the co-defendants allegedly stopped filing his federal tax returns in 2000, demanded some $11 million in refunds on taxes previously paid and tried to settle other U.S. Treasury debts with fake checks.

All three were charged tax fraud and conspiracy, while Snipes faced six additional charges of willful failure to file a return from 1999 to 2004.

AP

Actor Wesley Snipes leaves the Federal Courthouse in Ocala Fla. in this Dec. 8, 2006, file photo.

The 45-year-old actor, star of the "Blade" films, faces a potential sentence of 16 years in prison, while Kahn and Rosile could get 10. However, sentences that long are extremely rare in these cases.

"We chose not to call witnesses because there was no need to. The government prosecutors have put on a case that simply does not come close to meeting the standard of its burden of proof," Snipes' attorney Daniel Meachum said in a statement.

The trial, which had been expected to last a month, opened Jan. 14. The prosecution rested Friday.

Nude buttocks may cost ABC $1.4 million

WASHINGTON (AP)—The Federal Communications Commission has proposed a $1.4 million fine against 52 ABC Television Network stations over a 2003 broadcast of cop drama NYPD Blue.

The fine is for a scene where a boy surprises a woman as she prepares to take a shower. The scene depicted "multiple, close-up views" of the woman's "nude buttocks" according to an agency order issued late Friday.

ABC is owned by the Walt Disney Co. The fines were issued against 52 stations either owned by or affiliated with the network.

FCC's definition of indecent content requires that the broadcast "depicts or describes sexual or excretory activities" in a "patently offensive way" and is aired between the hours of 6 a.m. and 10 p.m.

The agency said the show was indecent because "it depicts sexual organs and excretory organs—specifically an adult woman's buttocks."

The agency rejected the network's argument that "the buttocks are not a sexual organ."

Apartment seeker ends up in married landlord's bed

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

DearAbby

DEAR ABBY: I'm a middle-aged man who has been married for 20 years. I own a duplex in a nice neighborhood. Last week, I put an ad in the paper and a 21-year-old woman came to look at the upstairs apartment. The problem is, I found her attractive and had sex with her downstairs while my wife was not home.

What should I do?

—COULDN'T HELP MYSELF IN NEW YORK

DEAR COULDN'T HELP YOURSELF: While you were checking the woman out, did you also check her references? If the answer is no, you should hasten to your doctor to be checked for every STD known to man and woman, because you not only had unprotected sex with a stranger, but with one who would ALSO have sex with a stranger.

■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: My son, "Larry," has lost his driver's license until the case can go to court. However, he still continues to drive. Larry's wife doesn't want a confrontation with him, but she is worried that if he should get into an accident, he could be arrested. We're all concerned because with his license suspended, his insurance might not cover any accident or ensuing lawsuit, and his family could be bankrupt.

What should his wife do? Hide the keys? Call the police?

—WORRIED MOM, ONTARIO, CANADA

DEAR WORRIED MOM: You have every right to be concerned, and so does Larry's wife. For an adult, your son's behavior is immature and shows extremely poor judgment.

It's too bad that your daughter-in-law is afraid of a confrontation because that is what it may take. You ask if she should hide the keys or call the police. I have another suggestion. If necessary, she should give your son's keys to YOU, to be returned only after his case has been adjudicated.

■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: I have lived in my condo for three years. My across-the-hall neighbors moved in two years ago. To welcome them, I left a bottle of wine, some bread and a floral arrangement outside their door. I received a gracious thank-you note in return. Since then, we have talked in the hall, but socialized only rarely because I travel frequently for business.

I recently married a phenomenal man. He also travels extensively, so he has rarely seen our neighbors. When he moved his belongings into our condo, the neighbors popped over with a bottle of wine (they have a cellar) and a fruit basket. We thanked them profusely, but I handed the bottle of wine back, stating, "We don't drink, but maybe you could open it and think of us when you do."

What I didn't mention to the neighbors is the fact that my husband is a recovering alcoholic, 15 years and counting. Again, thanks were offered and I wrote a thank-you card that very night. While I was writing the card, my husband gently intimated that I may have committed a faux pas by returning the wine. He thinks we should have accepted it to be hospitable, then re-gifted it to someone else. What do you think?

—NO OFFENSE INTENDED IN N.Y.

DEAR NO OFFENSE INTENDED: What's done is done, so don't flog yourself. However, once a gift is received, it belongs to the recipient to do with as he or she wishes. And the "proper" thing to have done would have been to thank them warmly for their thoughtfulness—and then re-gifted it to someone else.

■ ■ ■

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

■ ■ ■

What teens need to know about sex, drugs, AIDS and getting along with peers and parents is in "What Every Teen Should Know." To order, send a business-sized, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for $6 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby – Teen Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included in the price.)

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson

SO WHAT ARE WE SUPPOSED TO BE DOING?
WE'RE SUPPOSED TO BE RESEARCHING THE PLANET MERCURY.
SO WHAT HAVE WE FOUND OUT?
NOTHING! I'M NOT GOING TO DO THIS WHOLE THING MYSELF!
YOU'D PROBABLY GOOF IT ALL UP IF YOU DID. LET'S GET STARTED.
YES! LET'S!
I'LL BE THE MANAGEMENT, AND YOU CAN BE THE LABOR. FIRST, GET SOME BOOKS.
DOES ANYONE WANT TO TRADE PARTNERS?
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WATTERSON

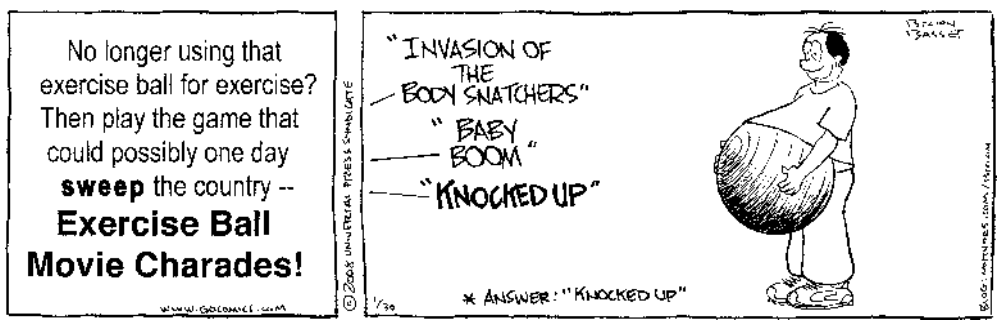
Garfield®

By Jim Davis

THE WHOLE WORLD IS AGAINST ME!
JIM DAVIS 1-30
Text GARFIELD to 85462 for US ONLY
I DON'T NEED ANY HELP, THANK YOU
Distributed by Universal Press Syndicate

Adam@home

By Bryan Basset


No longer using that exercise ball for exercise? Then play the game that could possibly one day sweep the country -- Exercise Ball Movie Charades!
"INVASION OF THE BODY SNATCHERS"
"BABY BOOM"
"KNOCKED UP"
* ANSWER: "KNOCKED UP"
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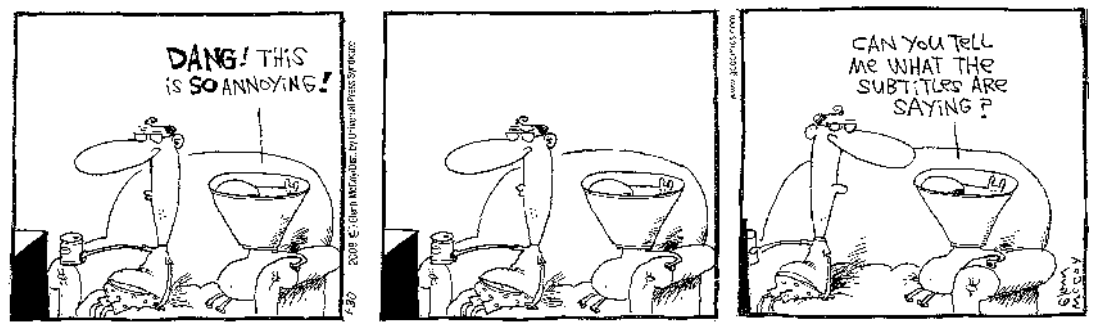
1/30

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

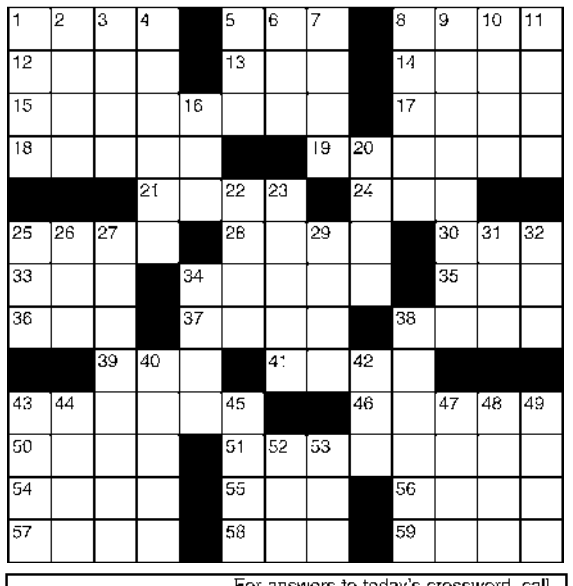
ACROSS
1 Dispatches, "Sopranos"-style
5 Sprite
8 Genie's home
12 Scheme
13 Ultramodernist
14 Hebrew month
15 Bullpark figure?
17 Raced
18 Offspring
19 Triple X?
21 Leave a lasting impression
24 — second
25 Dumbstruck
28 Hang around lazily
30 Spelldown
33 Solidify
34 Custom
35 Trail behind
36 Peculiar
37 Bloodhound's clue
38 "Wozzeck" composer
39 Have bills
41 Sushi eater's beverage
43 Procession
46 Drive on
50 Comet competitor
51 Mad Tea Party guest
54 Stow cargo
55 Wildebeest
56 Pumps up the volume
57 Cupid's alias
58 Longing
59 Unfavorable votes

DOWN
1 Makes up one's mind
2 Disaster on stage
3 "Queen — Day"
4 Intoxicated
5 Conclude
6 Writer Buscaglia
7 Stronghold
8 Old tongue
9 Just so cute
10 Shopping venue
11 Quarry
16 Pismire
20 Sword handle
22 Dressed (in)
23 Vagrants
25 Past
26 Marry
27 Site of great wealth
29 Old Italian money
31 Listener
32 Early bird?
34 Got rid of weeds
38 Express regret
40 Depilates, in a way
42 Kipling lad
43 Ashen
44 Open a bit
45 Provocative
47 Cougar
48 Spot
49 Not so much
52 Inseparable
53 Diamond score

Solution time: 21 mins.

F	I	N	D	■	G	Y	M	■	S	C	O	W
O	D	O	R	■	L	E	U	■	U	R	G	E
R	O	S	E	B	O	W	L	■	M	A	L	I
■	■	■	S	A	W	■	L	I	M	B	E	R
D	A	I	S	Y	■	S	A	R	I	■	■	■
E	N	V	Y	■	S	P	L	I	T	P	E	A
E	T	A	■	P	E	E	L	S	■	L	A	X
P	I	N	M	O	N	E	Y	■	S	E	R	E
■	■	■	E	G	A	D	■	G	L	A	N	D
M	A	R	M	O	T	■	E	A	U	■	■	■
O	C	H	O	■	O	N	S	T	R	I	K	E
L	E	E	R	■	R	I	P	■	P	R	I	M
D	D	A	Y	■	S	L	Y	■	S	E	T	S

Yesterday's answer 1-30



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Khleo Thomas, 19; Wilmer Valderrama, 28; Christian Bale, 34; Phil Collins, 57

Happy Birthday: Don't take anything for granted this year. You have the drive, stamina and work ethic to pull off whatever you want to pursue. Your desire and energy to complete what you start will take you the distance. Be proud and fear nothing and you will win the respect and admiration of others. Your numbers are 7, 13, 23, 27, 33, 36

ARIES (*March 21-April 19*): You are probably overreacting to something someone said or did. Put yourself in another environment that will take you out of your current situation and give you time to think. Helping others will stabilize you. ✪✪✪

TAURUS (*April 20-May 20*): Sitting idle, waiting on someone who won't budge is a waste of time. Go it alone and you will accomplish more in the end. Don't let personal issues stand in the way of your pursuits. ✪✪✪

GEMINI (*May 21-June 20*): Put everything you've got into a plan you've wanted to develop. You will have what it takes to make things happen and the imagination to help you deliver your idea with great enthusiasm and confidence. ✪✪✪

CANCER (*June 21-July 22*): Look at the existing possibilities and you will see that a few minor changes can be to your advantage. Take note of what close friends, children and family tell you. Sometimes it's the encouragement you receive that makes the difference. ✪✪✪✪

LEO (*July 23-Aug. 22*): Calm down and keep your thoughts to yourself. Observe rather than letting your emotions or jealousy cause you to make a costly mistake. Don't let someone you love get away with something you don't agree with—talk matters through rationally. ✪✪

VIRGO (*Aug. 23-Sept. 22*): You will make headway today. You can make personal plans, spice up your look or change your lifestyle or your job with success today. Don't hold back or wait for another time to make your move. ✪✪✪✪

LIBRA (*Sept. 23-Oct. 22*): Talk is cheap and not always beneficial and today that is exactly how you should regard what's being said to you. Put your time into developing something that interests you. Children, travel and learning will all play a role in your life today. ✪✪✪

SCORPIO (*Oct. 23-Nov. 21*): Keep things low key or you may find yourself in a predicament that will slow you down or leave you vulnerable. Stand up for your rights but don't waste your time arguing. Do what's best for you, not someone else. ✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS (*Nov. 22-Dec. 21*): Not too much will go unnoticed, so be careful what you say and do, especially around friends, neighbors and relatives. You will be limited if you exaggerate. Backtracking may be required but it isn't likely to help you smooth things over entirely. ✪✪✪

CAPRICORN (*Dec. 22-Jan. 19*): Give and take will work out splendidly for you today. You will have the mastermind of a genius when it comes to finance, legal matters or settlements. You've got what it takes to make subtle changes that will enhance your position and make you a star. ✪✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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AQUARIUS (*Jan. 20-Feb. 18*): Choose your words wisely. Talk may be cheap but it will backfire if you address emotional situations negatively. Listen to opposing information. Your willingness to compromise will make your life easier. ✪✪

PISCES (*Feb. 19-March 20*): You know what you want, so don't waste time pussyfooting around the issues that concern you. Money is in the picture but will come to you through a most unusual source. Be grateful for what you receive and sorrowful for what you deny yourself. ✪✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are giving and adaptable. You are emotional, thirsty for knowledge and dedicated to making the world a better place. You are a doer, a Good Samaritan and a lover.

Eugenia's Web sites: ***astroadvice.com*** *for fun,* ***eugenialast.com*** *for confidential consultations*

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

	6	9	5				1	3
		4	1	2		6	7	
				8		2		
			6	7	1			
		2				7		
7	3		2				8	
8							6	
	1	5	4				2	
			7	3			9	

Difficulty Level ★★★ 1/30

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer

8	2	7	1	5	4	6	3	9
5	6	1	3	9	2	7	4	8
9	3	4	6	8	7	5	2	1
4	1	2	5	7	6	9	8	3
3	7	5	9	2	8	4	1	6
6	8	9	4	1	3	2	7	5
2	5	8	7	3	9	1	6	4
7	9	6	8	4	1	3	5	2
1	4	3	2	6	5	8	9	7

Difficulty Level ★★ 1/29

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and **CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD.** The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

MEDICAL RESIDENCY Solution: 9 letters

E	E	B	Ⓔ	F	U	S	P	Y	W	O	R	K	S	T
D	T	Ⓡ	E	R	F	G	R	A	D	U	A	T	E	I
U	Ⓐ	U	G	D	L	A	G	E	L	R	S	E	C	A
Ⓒ	D	E	T	N	M	E	T	C	F	O	L	L	O	W
A	N	Y	L	I	M	A	F	S	C	I	I	S	E	N
T	A	O	R	O	T	A	T	I	O	N	E	E	I	O
I	M	P	I	J	T	S	E	E	I	U	K	L	A	I
O	H	D	U	T	Y	D	N	C	S	J	P	U	D	S
N	M	O	E	S	A	O	S	I	B	O	A	R	D	I
R	E	N	U	R	H	C	H	I	E	F	G	L	S	V
O	D	C	G	S	H	T	I	M	E	H	E	Y	A	R
I	I	A	I	O	E	O	F	L	N	I	A	R	T	E
N	C	L	O	F	W	R	T	T	P	D	Y	N	A	P
E	A	L	L	U	F	N	S	U	S	P	E	N	D	U
S	L	L	I	K	S	O	E	L	B	M	A	R	C	S

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Application, Attend, Bedmates, Board, Care, Chief, Clinic, Costs, Data, Days, Doctor, Duty, Education, Family, Field, Follow, Full, Gown, Grade, Graduate, Hands, House, Institute, Join, Junior, Legal, Mandate, Medical, Office, On Call, Page, Primary, Push, Rotation, Rules, School, Scramble, Senior, Shifts, Skills, Staff, Supervision, Suspend, Time, Train, Urgent, Wage, Wait, Week, Work

Yesterday's Answer: Luxurious

Treasury 5 is here! Send check or money order for $7.95 each plus $3.25 postage and handling each ($14.20 total each) U.S. funds only for the first volume, $1.50 p/h for each additional volume to Universal Press Syndicate, Attn: Wonderwords, 4520 Main St., Kansas City, Mo. 64111 or call toll-free 1-800-255-5345 ext. 6656. Order online at puzzles.com.

CLASSIFIED ADS

CLASSIFIEDS RATES AND POLICIES

Saipan Tribune's Classifieds Section gives you the right exposure without hurting your pockets. Stretch your dollar and get results.

CLASSIFIED ADS

Saipan Tribune also offers a Super Saver Package—a complete 7-day run on both print and online edition, for as low as $25 per 3 liner ad for garage sales, apartment rentals, help wanted, auto and more. You can choose from any of below packages that fits your budget.

ADS (7DAYS)	COMBO (PRINT AND ONLINE)
• 3-Liner	$25
• 5-Liner	$35
• 3-Liner with picture	$45
• 5-Liner with picture	$55

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

As added service to our valued customers, you may now submit all your JVA placements for announcement/publication in *Saipan Tribune's* print and online edition and KZMI/KCNM at the same time. No more worries of having to go to two different locations every time you need to place job vacancy announcements. Special rates are available for JVA customers under this arrangement.

Print*	
• 1st position	$10
• 2nd position	$3
• Succeeding positions	$1

LOWER RATES! Effective Feb. 3, 2007

Combo (Print and Online)*	
• 1st position	$13
• 2nd position	$4
• Succeeding positions	$2

Radio (KCNM/KZMI)	
• Up to 6 positions	$5
• More than 6 positions	$10

*These rates apply to all vacancy announcements that include corresponding benefits and which announcements are all under the same company name.

ADVERTISING DEADLINE

Classified Ads

Ads must be submitted before 12 noon 2 days prior to publication date

Job Vacancy Announcements

Monday Through Friday Issues: All ads placed before 12 noon will come out the next publication date.

Saturday And Sunday Issues:
- *Saipan Tribune:* All ads placed Friday before 12 noon will come out Saturday issue and anything placed thereafter will be published on either Sunday or Monday issues.

- KCNM/KZMI: All ads placed on Friday (9am to 5pm) will be for Monday's radio announcement.

CANCELLATION

Classified Ads

Cancellations should be made before 12 noon of the day prior to date of publication.

Job Vacancy Announcements

Cancellations should be made before 12 noon of the day prior to date of publication.

REFUNDS

Refunds will only be made if cancellation deadlines are met. No refunds will be made once ad is already printed.

CHECK YOUR ADS

Saipan Tribune will not be responsible for errors after the first day of publication. Errors should be called in before noon of the issue date. *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

ADVERTISING POLICY

All advertising in the *Saipan Tribune* are subject to applicable rate sheet, copies of which are available from the Advertising Sales Department (please call 235-8747, 235-2769 or 235-6397). All ads will be subject to approval prior to publication. We reserve the right to edit, refuse, reject or cancel any ad at any time. Also, Saipan Tribune reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

FOR RENT RESIDENTIAL

Apartment room for rent: Fully furnished 1 brm, T/B, 24-hr water $210/month, near Conwood | Tel. 287-1372, 235-6748

FOR SALE COMMERCIAL

Bud's Bar is now for sale $18K-$20K. Everything goes. Serious buyers only. Contact Les @ 233-1113, 898-4866

JOB OPPORTUNITIES

1 GEN. MANAGER (W 80571)
Salary:$4.00/hour. Benefits: Self housing; self food; medical & workmen's compensation. Contact: Nao Marine Inc. @323-7251.

ACCOUNTANT (1)
Contact Judy Wei at Tel.# 234-3203
Eucon International School
Minimum of 5 years experience in general accounting, financial statement preparation and government reporting. Medical insurance and workers compensation are provided.

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6 WAITRESS/WAITER (W 80572)
Salary:$3.05-$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self provided housing; self provided food; medical & workers compensation provided. Contact: Asia West Investment Group, Inc. dba Memory Lane Karaoke Bar @234-8224/5/6.

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1 COOK (W 80573)
Salary:$600.00-$750.00/monthly. Benefits: Self provided housing; self provided food; medical & worksmen compensation provided. Contact: Asia West Investment Group, Inc. @234-8224/5/6.

1 HOUSEKEEPING CLEANER (W 80574)
Salary:$3.05-$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self provided housing; self provided food; medical & workers compensation provided. Contact: Asia West Investment Group, Inc. dba Paradise Hotel @234-8224/5/6.

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1 ENGR. TECHNICIAN (W 80575)
Salary:$900.00/monthly. Benefits: Self provided housing; self provided food; medical & workers compensation provided. Contact: Asia West Investment Group, Inc. dba Paradise Hotel @234-8224/5/6.

1 CARPENTER (W 80576)
Salary:$3.05-$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self provided housing; self provided food; medical & workers compensation provided. Contact: Asia West Investment Group, Inc. dba Paradise Hotel @234-8224/5/6.

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1 COMMERCIAL CLEANER (W 80577)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self arranged housing; self provided food; medical & workers compensation provided by employer. Contact: Li Yong Hong Corporation dba Hong Apartment Rental @483-9080.

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1 ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT (W 80578)
Salary:$3.55-$4.10/hour. Benefits: Workman's compensation & medical provided. Contact: Pacific Airport Services @235-4000.

WHATZIT Solution:
Kiss and make up

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1 CONTROLLER (W 80579)
Salary:$2,600.00/monthly. Benefits: Self arranged housing; self provided food; medical; dental & workman's compensation. Contact: Bridge Capital, LLC @322-2222.

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1 HOUSEWORKER (W 80580)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: $100.00/housing; $100.00/food; workmen's compensation & medical provided. Contact: Manuel C. & Zenaida S. Camacho @256-1076.

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1 GEN. MANAGER (W 80581)
Salary:$3.05/hour. Benefits: Self arranged housing; self provided food; employee to provide her own transportation to & from the job site; medical & workers compensation company provided. Contact: TKL Ent., Inc. dba New Rise Wholesale @235-5717.

1 PURCHASING AGENT (W 80582)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self arranged housing; self provided food; employer to provide medical expenses & workers compensation. Contact: TKL Enterprises Inc. dba New Rise Wholesale @235-5717.

1 SALES REPRESENTATIVE (W 80583)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self arranged housing; self provided food; employer to provide medical expenses & workers compensation. Contact: TKL Enterprises Inc. dba New Rise Wholesale @235-5717.

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1 HOUSEWORKER (W 80584)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: $100.00/deduction housing; $100.00/deduction food & medical provided. Contact: Carmen M Santos/Gregory P Calvo @288-5448.

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1 LIVE-IN HOUSEWORKER (W 80585)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: $100.00/deduction housing & $100.00/deduction food. Contact: Jose C. Ayuyu @235-8761.

NEW Rattan Furniture FOR SALE
Expensive material
Call 235-4791, 433-9616, 285-7446

RADIATOR

overhaul & Repair
233-5641
Open 7 Day a Week 9:00 AM-9:00 PM

Marianas Maid Services
Are you overwhelmed at work?
Has taking care of your kids and the housework become a burden?
LET US MAKE YOUR HOME OR OFFICE
SPARKLE
Cleaning services starting as low as $30 per cleaning.
All equipment and cleaning supplies provided.
All our staff has been hand picked and are reliable.
Ironing, Laundry, Window washing and many other services available upon request.
Contact Julie at 287-6542 to schedule an appointment.

$200 REWARD FOR LOST WALLET
Brown wallet lost within the vicinity of Tony Roma's, Garapan on January 25, 2008 around 5 a.m. Important documents like entry permit (#156077) and drivers license (#12222003) needed to be returned to owner.
Reward of $200 will be given.
No questions asked.
If found or any information, please call 285-4469.

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
CNMI GOVERNMENT
INVITATION TO BID
ITB No.: 2008-CDA-01-ITB

OPENING DATE: Friday, February 1, 2008 **TIME: 10:00 a.m.**

"SECURITY SERVICES FOR THE PACIFIC GARDENIA HOTEL"

COPIES OF THE SCOPE OF WORK MAY BE OBTAINED AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR, DIVISION OF PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY IN LOWER BASE DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

PREFERENCE IS AVAILABLE TO U.S. CITIZENS OR PERMANENT RESIDENTS AS PER PUBLIC LAW 15-95 AND AS FURTHER AMENDED BY PUBLIC LAW 15-118 AND MUST BE SUBMITTED WITH THE BID IF PREFERENCE IS CLAIMED.

/s/OSCAR C. CAMACHO, Acting, CEO
/s/ HERMAN S. SABLAN, Director, P&S

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
CNMI GOVERNMENT
INVITATION TO BID
ITB No.: ITB08-OHS-041

SUBMISSION DATE: FEBRUARY 15, 2008 **TIME: 10:00 A.M.**

"JANITORIAL SERVICES FOR THE OFFICE OF HOMELAND SECURITY BUILDING NUMBER 1326 & 1358"

COPIES OF THE SCOPE OF WORK MAY BE PICKED-UP AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR, DIVISION OF PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY IN LOWER BASE DR., SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

A MANDATORY SITE VISIT WILL BE CONDUCTED ON FEBRUARY 11, 2008 AT 9:30 A.M.

LOCAL BUSINESS PREFERENCE FOR US CITIZENS OR PERMANENT RESIDENTS PURSUANT TO PL 15-95 AND AS AMENDED BY PUBLIC LAW 15-118 **DOES NOT APPLY** TO THIS ITB.

/s/PATRICK J. TENORIO, SPECIAL ASSISTANT FOR HOMELAND SECURITY
/s/ HERMAN S. SABLAN, DIRECTOR, P&S

WHATZIT?™

Find the familiar phrase, saying or name in this arrangement of letters.

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Find today's solution in this section

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
CNMI GOVERNMENT
INVITATION TO BID
ITB No.: ITB08-CGC-040

SUBMISSION DATE: FEBRUARY 26, 2008 **TIME: 10:00 A.M.**

"PURCHASE OF A 15 PASSENGER VAN FOR THE COMMUNITY GUIDANCE CENTER"

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE PICK-UP AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR, DIVISION OF PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY IN LOWER BASE DR., SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

PREFERENCE IS AVAILABLE TO U.S. CITIZENS OR PERMANENT RESIDENTS AS PER PUBLIC LAW 15-95 AND AS FURTHER AMENDED BY PUBLIC LAW 15-118 AND MUST BE SUBMITTED WITH THE BID IF PREFERENCE IS CLAIMED.

/s/ JOSEPH K.P. VILLAGOMEZ, SECRETARY OF HEALTH
/s/ HERMAN S. SABLAN, DIRECTOR, P&S

JOB OPPORTUNITIES

1 DECK ENGINEER (W 80586)
Salary:$900.00-$1,500.00/monthly. Benefits: Free company housing; $8.00/food per allowance; medical insurance coverage & workers compensation. Contact: Saipan Crewboats, Inc. @322-7346.

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1 SEWER (W 80587)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Employee to provide own food; employer to provide medical & workmen's compensation. Contact: Ma. Rosario O. Yoshimoto dba Rose Boutique & Dress Shop @234-7422.

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1 COMMERCIAL CLEANER (W 80588)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Workers compensation & medical benefits. Contact: Clide Aguon & Mizanur Khan @285-8585.

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2 ELECTRICIAN (W 80589)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Medical benefits & workers compensation. Contact: D&S Corporation Inc. @234-6397.

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1 TECHNICIAN, A/C AND REF. (W 80590)
Salary:$5.50-$6.00/hour. Benefits: Free housing; self provided food; workers compensation insurance & medical expense. Contact: Chong's Corp. @234-6560.

1 ELECTRICIAN (W 80591)
Salary:$5.50-$6.00/hour. Benefits: Free housing; self provided food; workers compensation insurance & medical expense. Contact: Chong's Corp. @234-6560.

1 ENGINEER, MECHANICAL (SALES) (W 80592)
Salary:$2,000.00-$2,200.00/monthly. Benefits: Free housing; self provided food; workers compensation insurance & medical expense. Contact: Chong's Corp. @234-6560.

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3 WAITRESS (W 80593)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Medical & workers compensation. Contact: EC Entertainment & Promo, Inc. @235-6072/5.

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1 FOOD & BEVERAGE MANAGER (W 80594)
Salary:$17.163/hour. Benefits: $30.00/housing monthly; free food; workmans compensation & medical coverage. Contact: World Corporation dba Saipan World Resort @234-5900.

1 ACCOUNTANT (W 80595)
Salary:$11.538/hour. Benefits: $30.00/housing monthly; free food; workmans compensation & medical coverage. Contact: World Corporation dba Saipan World Resort @234-5900.

1 DEMI CHEF (W 80596)
Salary:$3.85/hour. Benefits: $30.00/housing monthly; free food; workmans compensation & medical coverage. Contact: World Corporation dba Saipan World Resort @234-5900.

1 CARPENTER (W 80597)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: $30.00/housing monthly; free food; workmans compensation & medical coverage. Contact: World Corporation dba Saipan World Resort @234-5900.

1 BEAUTICIAN (W 80598)
Salary:$5.00/hour. Benefits: $30.00/housing monthly; free food; workmans compensation & medical coverage. Contact: World Corporation dba Saipan World Resort @234-5900.

3 LAUNDRY WORKER (W 80599)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: $30.00/housing monthly; free food; workmans compensation & medical coverage. Contact: World Corporation dba Saipan World Resort @234-5900.

1 STOCK CLERK (W 80600)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: $30.00/housing monthly; free food; workmans compensation & medical coverage. Contact: World Corporation dba Saipan World Resort @234-5900.

1 CHEF DE PARTIE (W 80601)
Salary:$6.00/hour. Benefits: $30.00/housing monthly; free food; workmans compensation & medical coverage. Contact: World Corporation dba Saipan World Resort @234-5900.

1 HEADWAITER (W 80602)
Salary:$4.00/hour. Benefits: $30.00/housing monthly; free food; workmans compensation & medical coverage. Contact: World Corporation dba Saipan World Resort @234-5900.

3 FRONT DESK CLERK (W 80603)
Salary:$3.55-$7.00/hour. Benefits: $30.00/housing monthly; free food; workmans compensation & medical coverage. Contact: World Corporation dba Saipan World Resort @234-5900.

1 PAINTER (W 80604)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: $30.00/housing monthly; free food; workmans compensation & medical coverage. Contact: World Corporation dba Saipan World Resort @234-5900.

1 POWER PLANT OPERATOR (W 80605)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: $30.00/housing monthly; free food; workmans compensation & medical coverage. Contact: World Corporation dba Saipan World Resort @234-5900.

1 GARDENER (W 80606)
Salary:$4.00/hour. Benefits: $30.00/housing monthly; free food; workmans compensation & medical coverage. Contact: World Corporation dba Saipan World Resort @234-5900.

2 COOK (W 80607)
Salary:$3.55-$4.00/hour. Benefits: $30.00/housing monthly; free food; workmans compensation & medical coverage. Contact: World Corporation dba Saipan World Resort @234-5900.

1 MAINTENANCE BLDG. REPAIRER (W 80608)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: $30.00/housing monthly; free food; workmans compensation & medical coverage. Contact: World Corporation dba Saipan World Resort @234-5900.

1 GUEST RELATION REPRESENTATIVE (W 80609)
Salary:$4.00/hour. Benefits: $30.00/housing monthly; free food; workmans compensation & medical coverage. Contact: World Corporation dba Saipan World Resort @234-5900.

1 CHIEF STEWARD (W 80610)
Salary:$7.00/hour. Benefits: $30.00/housing monthly; free food; workmans compensation & medical coverage. Contact: World Corporation dba Saipan World Resort @234-5900.

1 GUEST RELATION OFFICER (W 80611)
Salary:$3,000.00/monthly. Benefits: $30.00/housing monthly; free food; workmans compensation & medical coverage. Contact: World Corporation dba Saipan World Resort @234-5900.

1 MANICURIST (W 80612)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: $30.00/housing monthly; free food; workmans compensation & medical coverage. Contact: World Corporation dba Saipan World Resort @234-5900.

6 WAITER/WAITRESS (W 80613)
Salary:$3.55-$4.00/hour. Benefits: $30.00/housing monthly; free food; workmans compensation & medical coverage. Contact: World Corporation dba Saipan World Resort @234-5900.

1 MASON (W 80614)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: $30.00/housing monthly; free food; workmans compensation & medical coverage. Contact: World Corporation dba Saipan World Resort @234-5900.

1 SALES PROMOTOR (RUSSIAN MARKET) (W 80615)
Salary:$1,500.00/monthly. Benefits: $30.00/housing monthly; free food; workmans compensation & medical coverage. Contact: World Corporation dba Saipan World Resort @234-5900.

1 GRAPHIC DESIGNER (W 80616)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: $30.00/housing monthly; free food; workmans compensation & medical coverage. Contact: World Corporation dba Saipan World Resort @234-5900.

1 CASHIER (W 80617)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: $30.00/housing monthly; free food; workmans compensation & medical coverage. Contact: World Corporation dba Saipan World Resort @234-5900.

1 TRANSLATOR (KOREAN) (W 80618)
Salary:$8.00/hour. Benefits: $30.00/housing monthly; free food; workmans compensation & medical coverage. Contact: World Corporation dba Saipan World Resort @234-5900.

8 COOK (W 80619)
Salary:$3.55-$4.00/hour. Benefits: $30.00/housing monthly; free food; workmans compensation & medical coverage. Contact: World Corporation dba Saipan World Resort @234-5900.

1 MASSEUR/MASSEUSE (PANCHKARMATECH) (W 80620)
Salary:$5.25/hour. Benefits: $30.00/housing monthly; free food; workmans compensation & medical coverage. Contact: World Corporation dba Saipan World Resort @234-5900.

8 WAITER/WAITRESS (W 80621)
Salary:$3.55-$4.00/hour. Benefits: $30.00/housing monthly; free food; workmans compensation & medical coverage. Contact: World Corporation dba Saipan World Resort @234-5900.

2 MASSEUSE (W 80622)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: $30.00/housing monthly; free food; workmans compensation & medical coverage. Contact: World Corporation dba Saipan World Resort @234-5900.

1 NIGHT AUDITOR (W 80623)
Salary:$10.00/hour. Benefits: $30.00/housing monthly; free food; workmans compensation & medical coverage. Contact: World Corporation dba Saipan World Resort @234-5900.

1 STOREKEEPER (W 80624)
Salary:$5.00/hour. Benefits: $30.00/housing monthly; free food; workmans compensation & medical coverage. Contact: World Corporation dba Saipan World Resort @234-5900.

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1 COMMERCIAL CLEANER (W 80625)
Salary:$3.55-$3.75/hour. Benefits: Company provided housing at a charge of$30.00/monthly; workers compensation & medical expenses company provided. Contact: Nippon General Trading Corp. @233-8223.

1 BARTENDER (W 80626)
Salary:$3.55-$3.90/hour. Benefits: Company provided housing at a charge of$30.00/monthly; workers compensation & medical expenses company provided. Contact: Nippon General Trading Corp. @233-8223.

2 COOK (W 80627)
Salary:$3.55-$3.95/hour. Benefits: Company provided housing at a charge of$30.00/monthly; workers compensation & medical expenses company provided. Contact: Nippon General Trading Corp. @233-8223.

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1 TOUR COORDINATOR (W 80628)
Salary:$3.55-$4.05/hour. Benefits: Workers compensation & medical expenses company provided. Contact: HIS Saipan Inc. @234-7053.

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1 HOUSEWORKER (W 80629)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Medical. Contact: Michael Hart @285-4278.

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1 CARPET LAYER (W 80630)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self arranged housing; self provided food; medical expenses & workers compensation. Contact: EAP Corporation dba Filtrade Gen. Construction @234-6241.

1 MASON (W 80631)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self arranged housing; self provided food; medical expenses & workers compensation. Contact: EAP Corporation dba Filtrade Gen. Construction @234-6241.

1 CARPENTER (W 80632)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self arranged housing; self provided food; medical expenses & workers compensation. Contact: EAP Corporation dba Filtrade Gen. Construction @234-6241.

1 ELECTRICIAN (W 80633)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self arranged housing; self provided food; medical expenses & workers compensation. Contact: EAP Corporation dba Filtrade Gen. Construction @234-6241.

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1 SALES CONSULTANT (W 80634)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self arranged housing; self arranged food; medical & workers compensation provided by employer. Contact: PRFC Corporation @235-3578.

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2 HEAVY EQUIPMENT OPERATORS (W 80635)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self arranged housing; self arranged food; medical & workers compensation provided by employer. Contact: KP Company Ltd. @322-0007.

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1 MANAGER (W 80636)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self arranged housing; self arranged food; medical & workers compensation provided by employer. Contact: Emmy F. Larinay dba Saipan Machine Shop @235-5902.

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1 SCUBA (DIVING) INSTRUCTOR (W 80637)
Salary:$650.00/monthly. Benefits: Self arranged housing; self arranged food; medical & workers compensation provided by employer. Contact: 5J Corporation @288-1111.

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1 (CHIEF) COOK (W 80638)
Salary:$3.55-$4.50/hour. Benefits: Self arranged housing; self arranged food; medical & workers compensation provided by employer. Contact: PSG Professional Corp. @235-5902.

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2 CONSTRUCTION WORKER (W 80639)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self arranged housing; self arranged food; medical & workers compensation provided by employer. Contact: Double J Corporation dba PRO Construction @285-7153.

1 (ASSISTANT) MAINTENANCE REPAIRER (W 80640)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self arranged housing; self arranged food; medical & workers compensation provided by employer. Contact: Double J Corporation dba PRO Construction @285-7153.

2 CARPENTER (W 80641)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self arranged housing; self arranged food; medical & workers compensation provided by employer. Contact: Double J Corporation dba PRO Construction @285-7153.

2 MASON (W 80642)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self arranged housing; self arranged food; medical & workers compensation provided by employer. Contact: Double J Corporation dba PRO Construction @285-7153.

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1 MAINTENANCE (W 80643)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self arranged housing; self arranged food; medical & workers compensation provided by employer. Contact: JAP Professional Corporation @235-5902.

1 ACCOUNTANT (W 80644)
Salary:$6.00/hour. Benefits: Self arranged housing; self arranged food; medical & workers compensation provided by employer. Contact: JAP Professional Corporation @235-5902.

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1 STOREKEEPER (W 80645)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Medical & worksman compensation provided. Contact: Sunleader Co., Ltd. dba Sunleader Supermart @233-3222.

1 MEAT PACKER (W 80646)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Medical & worksman compensation provided. Contact: Sunleader Co., Ltd. dba Sunleader Supermart @233-3222.

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1 HOUSEWORKER (W 80647)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: $100.00/housing deductible; self provided food & medical provided. Contact: Warren Harrigan @235-1189.

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1 CIVIL ENGINEER (W 80648)
Salary:$1,700.00/monthly. Benefits: Self arranged housing; self provided food; medical expenses & workman compensation. Contact: E.Q. Construction Corp. @234-8827.

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1 HOUSEKEEPING (W 80649)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self arrange housing; self arrange food; free medical & workers compensation. Contact: Full House, Inc. @233-2288.

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1 ADMIN. ASSISTANT (W 80650)
Salary:$3.75/hour. Benefits: Self arrange housing; self arrange food; medical & workers compensation. Contact: Commonwealth Pacific Int'l Inc. @233-2288.

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1 WAITRESS/WAITER (W 80651)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self arrange housing; self arrange food; free medical & workers compensation. Contact: Tai Hu Int'l, Inc. @233-2288.

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1 ASST. MANAGER (W 80652)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Employee self housing; employee self food; free medical & worker compensation. Contact: Chung Hua Inc. @234-7768.

1 ELECTRONIC TECHNICIAN (W 80653)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Employee self housing; employee self food; free medical & worker compensation. Contact: Chung Hua Inc. @234-7768.

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2 A/C TECHNICIAN (W 80654)
Salary:$3.55-$5.00/hour. Benefits: Self arrange housing; self arrange food; workmen's compensation & medical provided by employer. Contact: Gonzalo V. Pangelinan Jr. dba Pacific Airconditioning & Ref. @234-9267.

DANILO T. AGUILAR, F0198
Attorney at Law
P.O. Box 505301
First Floor, San Jose Court Bldg.
Cor. Ghiyeghi St. & Wischira Way
San Jose, Saipan, MP 96950
TELEPHONE: (670) 234-8801
FAX: (670) 234-1251

Attorney for Plaintiff
BMW CORPORATION

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

BMW CORPORATION, Plaintiff, v. AB KON CO. and JAY KIM, in his capacity as Company President, Defendant.	CIVIL CASE NO. 07-0313 **SUMMONS BY PUBLICATION.**

TO THE ABOVE NAMED DEFENDANT: AB KON CO.

YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED and notified to file any answer you wish to make to the Complaint, a copy of which is given to you herewith, within thirty (30) days after the service of the Summons upon you, and to deliver or mail a copy of your answer to the Law Offices of Danilo T. Aguilar, whose address is P.O. Box 505301, First Floor San Jose Court Bldg., Cor. Ghiyeghi St. & Wischira Way, San Jose, Saipan MP 96950, as soon as practicable after filing your answer or sending it to the Clerk of Courts for filing.

Your answer should be in writing and filed with the Clerk of Court at the Guma Hustisia, Susupe, Saipan MP 96950. It may be prepared for you by your counsel and sent to the Clerk of the Court by messenger or mail. It is not necessary for you to appear personally until further notice.

If you fail to file an answer in accordance with this Summons, judgment of default may be taken against you for the relief in the complaint.

By order of this Court.

/s/ Clerk of Courts
Commonwealth of the
Northern Mariana Islands

Dated this 30th day of November, 2007.

DANILO T. AGUILAR, F0198
Attorney at Law
P.O. Box 505301
First Floor, San Jose Court Bldg.
Cor. Ghiyeghi St. & Wischira Way
San Jose, Saipan, MP 96950
TELEPHONE: (670) 234-8801
FAX: (670) 234-1251

Attorney for Plaintiff
BMW CORPORATION

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

BMW CORPORATION, Plaintiff, v. AB KON CO. and JAY KIM, in his capacity as Company President, Defendant.	CIVIL CASE NO. 07-0313 **SUMMONS BY PUBLICATION.**

TO THE ABOVE NAMED DEFENDANT: JAY KIM

YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED and notified to file any answer you wish to make to the Complaint, a copy of which is given to you herewith, within thirty (30) days after the service of the Summons upon you, and to deliver or mail a copy of your answer to the Law Offices of Danilo T. Aguilar, whose address is P.O. Box 505301, First Floor San Jose Court Bldg., Cor. Ghiyeghi St. & Wischira Way, San Jose, Saipan MP 96950, as soon as practicable after filing your answer or sending it to the Clerk of Courts for filing.

Your answer should be in writing and filed with the Clerk of Court at the Guma Hustisia, Susupe, Saipan MP 96950. It may be prepared for you by your counsel and sent to the Clerk of the Court by messenger or mail. It is not necessary for you to appear personally until further notice.

If you fail to file an answer in accordance with this Summons, judgment of default may be taken against you for the relief in the complaint.

By order of this Court.

/s/ Clerk of Courts
Commonwealth of the
Northern Mariana Islands

Dated this 13th day of December, 2007.

Paul leads Hornets past Nuggets, win streak at 9

NEW ORLEANS (AP)—Chris Paul had 23 points, 17 assists, and nine rebounds, and the New Orleans Hornets ran away with their ninth-straight win, 117-93 over the Denver Nuggets on Monday.

Even in a game featuring recently elected All-Star starter Allen Iverson, Paul was the best player on the floor in this contest. Iverson also scored 23, but had only three assists and got little help other than from Kenyon Martin, who scored 18.

The game also featured a pair of centers vying for a reserve spot in the All-Star game: Denver's Marcus Camby and New Orleans' Tyson Chandler.

In this game there was no comparison. Chandler finished with 10 points and 16 rebounds. Camby was a non-factor for most of the first three quarters. He didn't score his first point until he made a free throw with 1:52 to go in the third period. He finished with three points and five rebounds.

Peja Stojakovic hit four 3-pointers and finished with 19 points for New Orleans, and Jannero Pargo and David West each scored 13 points.

Mavericks 103, Grizzlies 84

At Memphis, Tennessee, Josh Howard hit his first eight shots on the way to 26 points and Dallas shot 54 percent in a victory over Memphis.

Howard finished 10-for-17 for Dallas, which won its fourth straight and 12 in the last 14. It also was the Mavericks 13th straight win over the Grizzlies, including a sweep of Memphis in the opening round of the 2006 playoffs.

Dirk Nowitzki added 20 points and 11 rebounds and Jason Terry finished with 14 points for the Mavericks. Erick Dampier contributed 11 points and 12 rebounds in the first game of a four-game trip that will take Dallas to Boston, Detroit and Orlando.

Rudy Gay led Memphis with 18 points, Kyle Lowry scored 17 and Juan Carlos Navarro had 16 points. Pau Gasol, finished with 13 points for Memphis, which lost its third game in the last four.

Jazz 97, Spurs 91

At Salt Lake City, Deron Williams had 11 points and 14 assists and Utah downed San Antonio for its fifth straight win.

Carlos Boozer and Andrei Kirilenko scored 23 points each for the Jazz, who controlled the team that dominated them in the Western Conference finals last season. The Spurs, who won the playoff series in five games, never led Monday night.

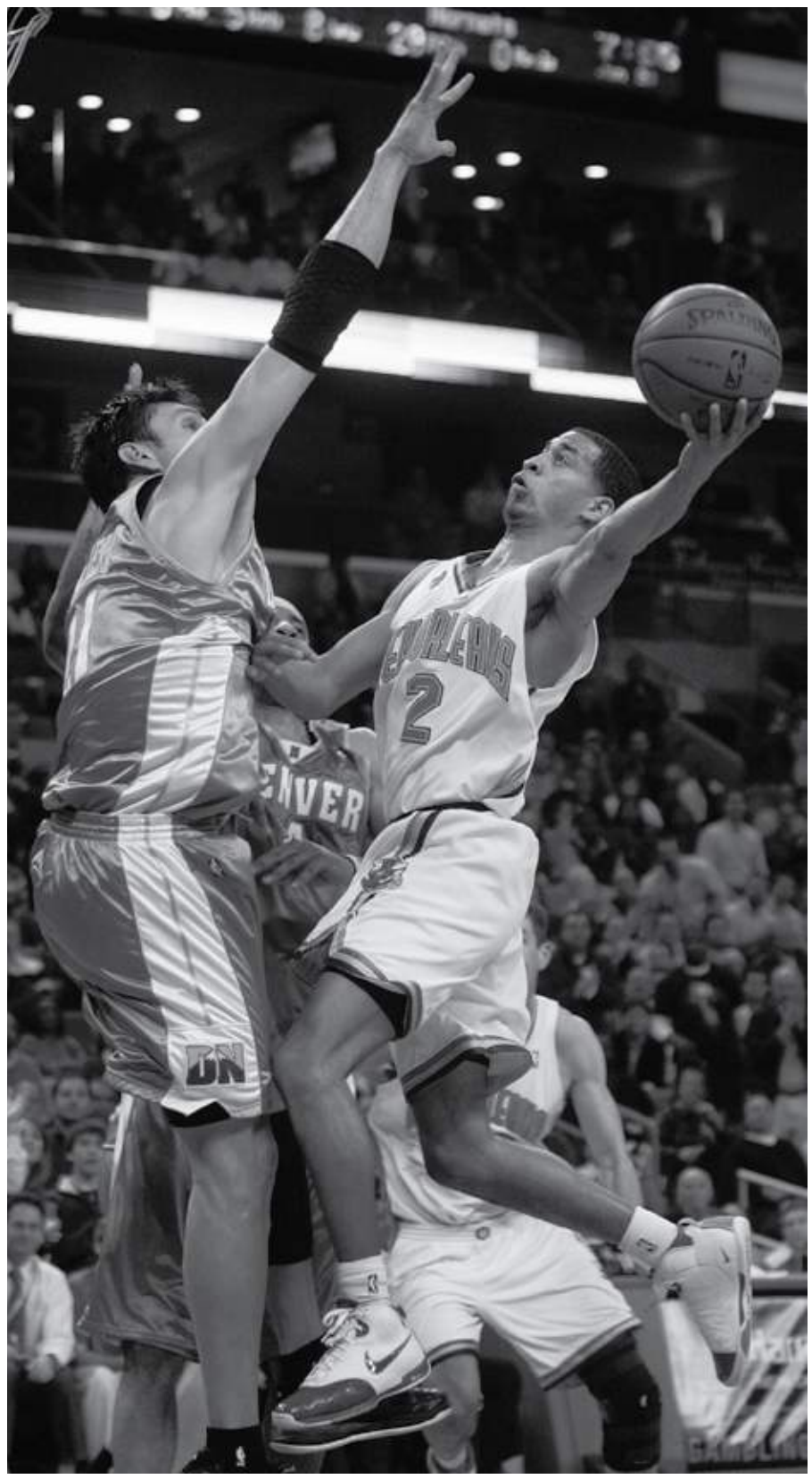
Tim Duncan had 26 points and 11 rebounds and Manu Ginobili scored 29 points for the Spurs, who were knocked around by Utah's physical play. San Antonio committed 20 turnovers.

Bobcats 107, Clippers 100

At Los Angeles, Gerald Wallace had 23 points, eight assists and six rebounds, Jason Richardson added 20 points and Charlotte beat the undermanned Los Angeles Clippers.

Emeka Okafor had 14 points and nine rebounds for the Hornets, who won on the road for only the fourth time in 17 tries this season despite going the final 5:13 without a field goal. Their other three road victories were at Miami, Boston and Chicago.

Tim Thomas had a season-high 29 points and 13 rebounds for the Clippers, who were missing two of their best players.



AP

New Orleans Hornets Jannero Pargo (2) shoots as Denver Nuggets forward Eduardo Najera (21), of Mexico, plays defense in the first half of their NBA basketball game in New Orleans, Monday, Jan. 28, 2008.

NBA BRIEFS

Grizzlies cut ties with Stoudamire

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (AP)—The Memphis Grizzlies waived veteran point guard Damon Stoudamire on Monday and plan to release him if he clears waivers. The move, announced before Monday night's game against the Dallas Mavericks, had been expected for weeks. Stoudamire, a former first-round pick in his 13th season out of Arizona, had been relegated to third-string status behind rookie Mike Conley, the fourth overall pick in last year's draft, and Kyle Lowry in his second year out of Villanova. The 34-year-old Stoudamire has not played in 14 games, is averaging 7.3 points and 3.9 assists. His last action was against San Antonio on Dec. 30. "We appreciate the consummate professionalism and love for the game which Damon exhibited in Memphis," Chris Wallace, Grizzlies vice president of basketball operations and general manager, said in a prepared statement. "The entire organization wishes him the best and hopes that he realizes his wish to join a championship contending team." Stoudamire was not in the club's locker room before the game. "I miss him. I really do," Memphis coach Marc Iavaroni said before the game. "He's been a positive influence. He and I had a very straightforward relationship from Day One." Stoudamire was signed by the Grizzlies as a free agent in 2005 after seven-plus seasons with Portland. He suffered a season-ending knee injury on Dec. 30, 2005, in Portland.

Mavs' Harris sidelined for 2-3 weeks

DALLAS (AP)—Mavericks guard Devin Harris will miss at least 2-3 weeks with a bone bruise on his left ankle. Harris was injured when he landed awkwardly on a hard drive to the basket early in the fourth quarter of a 90-85 victory against Denver on Sunday. He didn't travel for Dallas' game Monday at Memphis. An MRI performed Monday showed no additional damage to the ankle. In his first year as the full-time starter at point guard, Harris is averaging career highs of 14.4 points and 5.3 assists per game. He's shooting 48 percent from the field, including a career-best 36 percent from 3-point range.

T'wolves send Richard to NBDL

MINNEAPOLIS (AP)—With no playing time in sight for Chris Richard, the Minnesota Timberwolves sent the rookie forward to Sioux Falls of the NBA's developmental league on Monday to get some extended minutes. Richard, a second-round pick out of Florida, has not played in a game since he got two minutes on Jan. 18 at Phoenix. He has not played the previous five games, and coach Randy Wittman said he thought Richard would benefit more by getting some playing time with the SkyForce in the D-League. "He's going to get to play, I think, six games in a little less than two weeks and then we'll bring him back up here," Wittman said. "But he needs to play. He's not getting the opportunity and I didn't foresee a lot of games coming up." The burly power forward is averaging 1.3 points and 1.9 rebounds in limited duty for the Timberwolves this season. But basketball boss Kevin McHale said the team likes what it sees so far. "Chris is a player that we really like and we think has a bright future," McHale said in a statement. "With the current schedule in Sioux Falls, he'll be able to have a few days of practice with the team before playing in several upcoming games."

Chris Webber set to return to Warriors

OAKLAND, Calif. (AP)—More than 13 years after Chris Webber demanded to leave the Golden State Warriors, the free-agent forward is all set to return.

Webber sent an e-mail to The Associated Press on Monday night confirming he will rejoin the Warriors and coach Don Nelson, who won a power struggle with the former No. 1 draft pick in their messy first stint with the franchise.

Webber might be with Golden State by Friday night when the club returns home to face Charlotte. The five-time All-Star isn't expected to join the Warriors during a two-game road trip this week to Houston and New Orleans, said an NBA source who spoke on condition of anonymity because Webber hadn't formally signed with the club. The team had no announcement planned Monday night.

Nelson apparently masterminded the Warriors' decision to re-sign Webber, who hasn't played in the NBA this season, as a backup big man and offensive playmaker. Nelson has spoken repeatedly about the team's hopes of signing Webber in recent days.

Just a few days after Chris Mullin said he planned no significant changes to the club with the NBA's second-most victories since mid-November, Nelson apparently convinced Golden State's top executive to take a chance on Webber. The power forward's diminished athleticism and uneven playoff performances convinced his hometown Pistons not to re-sign him last summer.

A slow-footed, soon-to-be 35-year-old big man with surgically repaired knees and a bad history with the head coach seems to be a terrible fit for the Warriors' harmonious team chemistry and their up-tempo style. But Nelson has done stranger things in his highly successful career.

"I'm afraid if we don't get him here, our team is not strong enough to be a playoff team," said Nelson, whose club is seventh in the conference at 27-18 after two months of largely outstanding play. "I think he has a chance to make some of our players better and make our team better. Really that's all that's important. I'll get along with anybody who can help our team."

The second-winningest coach in NBA history claims the Warriors desperately need Webber's passing abilities and bulk to compete with the Western Conference's best centers and power forwards. Webber's arrival could mean less playing time for Al Harrington and Andris Biedrins, while also increasing the likelihood Golden State will make a move near the trade deadline.

Webber was acquired by the Warriors in 1993 in a draft-day trade with Orlando, which made him just the second sophomore to be the draft's top pick. He won the Rookie of the Year award and made the playoffs in his only season in Golden State.

But Webber repeatedly clashed with Nelson, demanding a trade before his second season. The former Michigan star eventually was dealt to Washington in November 1994 for Tom Gugliotta and three first-round picks, and Webber has been loudly booed at Oracle Arena ever since.

The battle turned out to be a serious setback for both men and the Golden State franchise. Webber toiled in Washington for four years before enjoying his best NBA seasons with Sacramento, while Nelson was fired by Golden State just a few months after Webber left—and the Warriors missed the playoffs for the first of 12 straight losing seasons.

Nelson returned to the club last season, installing a fast-paced offense built around Baron Davis. The rejuvenated roster snapped the Warriors' playoff drought, and the eighth-seeded club upset the league-leading Dallas Mavericks in the first round before losing to Utah.

Webber has not played since the Pistons lost to Cleveland in last season's Eastern Conference finals. A Greek club reportedly made a lucrative offer to Webber, but none of his preferred NBA destinations worked out.

Brady gets taped up for Patriots workout

PHOENIX (AP)—Tom Brady was back where he belongs Monday, behind center for the New England Patriots' first practice session of Super Bowl week. The NFL's Most Valuable Player missed three practices last week with a tender right ankle, which he had taped for Monday's training at Arizona State in nearby Tempe.

According to a pool report filed by the Chicago Tribune's Dan Pompei, the only reporter allowed to watch practice, the star quarterback appeared to have a slight limp. But he participated in all phases of practice, including jogging the length of the field twice at the end of drills.

Coach Bill Belichick, as he always does, refused to comment on any injuries, or on Brady's presence at the workout.

"Everybody practiced," Belichick said. "The injury report will be out Wednesday."

Brady's return from an injury he said he sustained in the AFC championship game against San Diego was a welcome sight to receiver Wes Welker.

"Anytime the MVP of the league is back, it has to be a positive," Welker said. "He looks good—the same dimples and all."

Brady, who wasn't made available to the media Monday, said his ankle was feeling good when the AFC champions met with reporters for the first time Sunday shortly after arriving in Phoenix.

"I'm not concerned about how it's going to affect my play," he said. "This won't keep me out."

Nor do his teammates seem concerned.

"I don't worry about Tom," tackle Matt Light said. "He can take care of himself. I have a bunch of guys in front of me from the Giants to worry about."

Brady's health became an issue a week ago when he was spotted wearing a protective boot on his right foot while visiting supermodel girlfriend Gisele Bundchen in New York. He sat out all three practices in Foxborough, Mass., when much of the game plan was being installed.

Will that slow down the record-setting passer against the New York Giants in Sunday's Super Bowl, when New England tries to become the first NFL team to go 19-0?

"This won't keep me out of this game," he said Sunday while comparing the injury to a similar problem before the 2002 Super Bowl, in which he was the MVP. "That ankle didn't keep me out of the last game. It would have to take a hell of a lot more than an ankle."

AP

With his right ankle taped, New England Patriots quarterback Tom Brady (12) runs before practice began at Sun Devil Stadium in Tempe, Ariz., Monday, Jan. 28, 2008.

Randy Moss' restraining order extended

BOSTON (AP)—A temporary restraining order against Randy Moss was extended until March 28 while the New England Patriots wide receiver was in Arizona on Monday preparing for the Super Bowl.

Moss' lawyer, Richard Sharpstein, said the decision came at a hearing in Fort Lauderdale, Fla., after he learned the player's longtime friend changed attorneys. She obtained the order Jan. 14.

Rachelle Washington's new attorney is Darrell Thompson, who replaces David McGill. A spokesman for Thompson confirmed the change. McGill did not return calls.

The temporary order requires Moss to stay at least 500 feet from Washington. No criminal charge has been brought. Washington, 35, alleged they had been in an "intimate relationship" since 1997.

Moss has denied the accusation by Washington that he committed "battery causing serious injury" to her at her Florida home Jan. 6. Washington did not attend Monday's session, Sharpstein said.

"He will stay completely away from her and has no desire to have contact with her," the lawyer told The Associated Press. "He's in Phoenix busy preparing to win the Super Bowl and on a day like today his mind is elsewhere."

Moss defended his conduct during an interview in the Patriots' locker room on Jan. 16. Four days later, New England beat San Diego 21-12 in the AFC championship game at Foxborough. For the second straight game, he caught just one pass.

On draft day last April, the Patriots sent a 2007 fourth-round draft choice to Oakland for Moss. He set an NFL season record of 23 touchdown catches, breaking Jerry Rice's mark by one. He finished tied for eighth in the league with 98 catches and second with 1,493 yards receiving.

Moss said the Washington has been a friend for 11 years and she asked for "six figures" for what he said was an accident in which she was hurt.

"They're false allegations, something I've been battling for like the last couple of days of threats going public if I didn't pay X amount of dollars," Moss said. "This young lady by no means is hurt. I didn't hurt her."

Sharpstein said Monday that McGill told him if Moss didn't agree to pay "a great deal of money" by 5 p.m. on Jan. 11, the day before the Patriots beat the Jacksonville Jaguars 31-20 in an AFC divisional playoff game, McGill would go public.

"It's blackmail," Sharpstein said. "Extortion is the technical crime."

McGill issued a statement Jan. 17, saying that Moss' representatives were the first to suggest that Moss pay the woman to keep the issue quiet.

"She has suffered mental and physical harm as a result of his actions," the statement said. "She simply wants him to take responsibility for what he has done. As a battery victim, she has shown great strength throughout this entire ordeal."

Washington also alleged that Moss refused to allow her to seek medical treatment. Moss denied that. Neither McGill nor Sharpstein has specified the nature of an injury.

Rocket's agent unveils career statistics report

NEW YORK (AP)—Roger Clemens' agent released an 18,000-word statistical report Monday to rebut allegations the pitcher's career rebounded about the time he was accused of using performance-enhancing drugs.

"Clemens' longevity was due to his ability to adjust his style of pitching as he got older, incorporating his very effective split-finger fastball to offset the decrease in the speed of his regular fastball caused by aging," said the report, created by Randy Hendricks and two associates at his firm.

Clemens' former trainer, Brian McNamee, claimed in last month's Mitchell Report on drugs in baseball that he injected the pitcher with steroids and human growth hormone at least 16 times in 1998, 2000 and 2001. Clemens vehemently denies the allegations, and Clemens and McNamee are among five witnesses scheduled to testify before a House committee on Feb. 13. Clemens also has sued McNamee for defamation.

Hendricks' report, which includes 38 charts, in some ways resembles a salary arbitration case. One of the charts shows Clemens' ERA was lower than the league average in all but two of his 23 major league seasons. The report also compares variations in Clemens' career with those of Randy Johnson, Curt Schilling and Nolan Ryan, and maintains slumps often can be correlated with injuries.

"Of the six years that feature Clemens' best ERA margins, two occurred in Boston, after he had been in the major leagues for several years; two occurred in his two years in Toronto; and two occurred after he switched leagues and pitched for the Houston Astros," the report said.

Clemens went 40-39 in his last four seasons with the Red Sox, and when the pitcher left Boston's general manager at the time, Dan Duquette, said Clemens was in the "twilight" of his career. Clemens was 192-111 with the Red Sox and won three Cy Young Awards and an MVP, then went 162-73 with Toronto, the New York Yankees and Houston, winning four Cy Youngs.

"Clemens was far from being in the 'twilight of his career' or 'washed up' in 1996, as some have speculated," the report said. "During the 1996 season Clemens ranked first in strikeouts in the American League and tied his own record by striking out 20 batters in Detroit on Sept. 18, 1996. In addition, he ranked sixth in the AL in ERA, second in the AL in hits per nine innings, and fifth in innings pitched. This performance cannot be reasonably categorized as a 'twilight.'"

Knoblauch to talk with House committee

WASHINGTON (AP)—Chuck Knoblauch is heading to Capitol Hill. Knoblauch, a four-time All-Star who played with Roger Clemens on the New York Yankees, agreed Monday to speak to a House committee investigating drug use in baseball after initially failing to respond to an invitation to testify.

His silence prompted the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee to issue a subpoena last week, but federal marshals were not able to track down Knoblauch right away. The 1991 AL Rookie of the Year eventually did make contact, and his twice-postponed meeting with committee staff for a deposition or transcribed interview will be Friday.

That session is preparation for the panel's hearing Feb. 13, when Knoblauch is among five scheduled witnesses, including Clemens and his former personal trainer, Brian McNamee.

Also scheduled to testify are Andy Pettitte, a former teammate and workout partner of Clemens' who also trained with McNamee, and ex-New York Mets clubhouse employee Kirk Radomski.

"We are pleased that Mr. Knoblauch has agreed to voluntarily participate in a transcribed interview or deposition with the committee. As a result, the committee is withdrawing the subpoena," Oversight committee chairman Henry Waxman and ranking Republican Tom Davis said in a statement.

Members of both majority and minority staffs declined to comment Monday when asked for details on Knoblauch's about-face. A lawyer identified by a committee staffer as Knoblauch's representative did not immediately return requests for comment made via telephone and e-mail.

Pettitte is slated to be the first Feb. 13 witness to appear for a deposition or transcribed interview, with his session scheduled for Wednesday. Clemens is to follow on Feb. 5, with McNamee on Feb. 7. Radomski's meeting with committee staff, originally scheduled for Feb. 1, then announced as "to be determined," is now listed on the committee's Web site for Feb. 12—the day before the hearing.

Representatives of baseball's players and owners, meanwhile, plan to meet later this week to discuss recommendations George Mitchell made in his report on baseball's steroids era, some of which are subject to collective bargaining.

Letters sent by Waxman and Davis to Clemens, Pettitte and Knoblauch on Jan. 16, requesting their appearances both at the hearing and a pre-hearing meeting, said: "The committee asks that you provide testimony about allegations in Senator George Mitchell's report ... that you and other Major League Baseball players used performance enhancing drugs during your professional baseball career."

The Mitchell Report, released last month, included McNamee's allegations that he injected Clemens with steroids in 1998 while they were with Toronto, and with steroids and human growth hormone in 2000 and 2001 while with New York. Clemens, a seven-time Cy Young Award winner, has repeatedly denied the accusations.

Pettitte acknowledged McNamee injected him with HGH twice while the pitcher was recovering from an injury.

McNamee told Mitchell he acquired HGH from Radomski for Knoblauch in 2001, and that he injected the player with it. Knoblauch's major league career ended in 2002.

Proceeds from Valentine's Walk to go to Wakai Nekko No Kai

By MARK RABAGO
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com
ASSISTANT EDITOR

Part of the proceeds from this year's 7th Annual Valentine's Walk of the Saipan Walking Association, Inc. will be donated to Wakai Nekko No Kai.

This was agreed upon yesterday during the local walking association's board of directors meeting at the Hafadai Beach Hotel coffee shop.

The Wakai Nekko No Kai floating university has been visiting the CNMI the past 39 years, but because of financial problems the 40th voyage this year has been scuttled.

However, Marianas Visitors Authority director J.M. Guerrero said Wakai Nekko No Kai Foundation president Hideo Kato will try for the 40th voyage next year.

The 7th Annual Valentine's Walk is scheduled for Feb. 9 and will start with a 6:30am registration at the Carolinian Utt across the Bank of Guam building in Garapan.

The kick-off for SAIWAI's 2008 season will offer 5- and 10-kilometer walking events and are held "in the spirit of Valentine's Day honoring love and lovers while focusing in enhancing the wellness of the heart and physical well-being through non-competitive walking."

The 5-km course will be from the Carolinian Utt to the Japanese Tank and back, while the 10-km route will have participants proceeding to the Oleai Bar and Grill and back.

Like in the past, the 2008 edition of the Valentine's Walk is sanctioned by IVV and as such SAIWAI and IVV members will receive credit for joining.

IVV has member walking clubs in the U.S., Canada, Brazil, Japan, South Korea, Turkey, Nepal, Australia, New Zealand, the CNMI, and 29 other European countries, including Germany.

For more information about 7th Annual Valentines Walk and SAIWAI's other events for 2008, contact Mario Espeleta at 322-8876, Hiroko Tenorio at 322-8781, or Bea Quitugua at 285-1694.

SAIWAI was incorporated as a non-profit corporation on July 27, 2001 and was established to promote public health through non-competitive walking.

Two other events were held recently to raise fund for the floating university.

The Wakai Nekko No Kai Friendship Golf Tournament was held last Wednesday at the Coral Ocean Point Golf Resort. Guerero said he hopes the golf tourney would raise an additional $5,000.

Two weekends ago, organizers of the 2008 Winter Festival of Runs put aside 10 percent of registration fees, amounting to $500, to the foundation.

In addition, local students are helping out by selling T-shirts and selling them for $20 each all over the island.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
SAIWAI directors Hiroko Tajima and Hiroko Tenorio smile for the camera during last year's Family Day Walk.

JAPANESE

From Page 28

The three-year professional wakeboarder got hooked on the extreme watersport when he was still 10 years old. From there, he developed his skills and decided to turn professional in 2005.

It didn't take too long for Toshiki to catch the professional scene by storm as he has won other titles, culminating with his biggest victory in last year's national championships.

It was Toshiki's and Nari's first time to visit Saipan, while Natsuki and Mizuki, who are still amateur wakeboarders, have visited the island more than once.

Toshiki, through interpreter Shinji Uchibayashi, said he plans to compete in a major U.S. tournament this year and hopes to join other international events to gain more exposure.

The four spent the afternoon testing the waves of the Saipan Lagoon onboard Uchibayashi's boat *Indy Tantrum*.

Uchibayashi, who is the general manager of Team Taga Saipan, said that they also added an extra 900 lbs. to make the boat heavier in order to create bigger waves.

ZAPANTA

From Page 28

Bowling Tournament, ruling the January roll-off with a 62-pin victory at the San Jose venue.

Torres followed pedestrian throws of 149, 151, and 135 with an eye-popping score of 246 pinfalls and finished with a 170.25 average after knocking down 681 pins.

He beat runners-up Zach Cruz and Raphael Zapanta for the monthly youth tournament that is held together with the MARPAC-sponsored Budweiser King and Queen of the Lanes.

The Prince/Princess of the Lanes as well as the Budweiser King and Queen of the Lanes Tournament is organized by the Saipan Bowling Association.

For more information about the King, Queen, Prince/Princess of the Lanes Bowling tournaments, see or contact SBA official Gigi Zapanta at 288-5627or e-mail zapanta@pticom.com.

ROCK STEADY

From Page 28

to-beat advantage, in the finals on Feb. 1. If a Game 2 occurs, the game will be played on Feb. 2.

Rock Steady also defeated the Sonics, 111-92, last Sept. 26 while the Suns downed the Junior Nationals, 74-64, on Nov. 26 in the elimination round.

That win was part of Rock Steady's five-game winning run before the Junior Nationals' ended their streak with a 91-89 win last Nov. 5. That loss was part of the Sonics 0-2 start and after that, they won five straight before losing to the Ol'Aces, 76-80, last Nov. 11.

The Sonics, meanwhile, hold the psychological edge over the Suns after squeezing out a 72-68 win on Oct. 17.

Rock Steady finished the regular season with a second-best 10-2 record, while the Sonics came in fourth with a 9-3 mark.

Rock Steady scored consecutive wins against the Bombers, 88-63, and the Suns, 98-90, to reach the semis. The Sonics, meanwhile, renewed their growing rivalry with the Junior Nationals last Jan. 16, when they managed to squeeze out an 88-86 decision.

The Suns ended the season tied with Rock Steady (10-2) but the latter earned the second seeding based on their win over the Sonny Flores-coached Saipan Stevedore crew.

NMA

From Page 28

Palau, Papua New Guinea, Tonga, and Vanuatu.

Adidas will be the major sponsor of the event and will be providing gear to all officials and athletes. Each team is allowed to bring eight athletes and one coach.

"It's very exiting to know that through [OAA's] help we can actually attract a major brand name to sponsor our events here in the CNMI," said NMA secretary general Robin Sapong.

Sapong said this is the first time that a Micronesian nation will host a major track and field championship and the first time that Saipan will also host the Grand Prix Series.

Sapong said the local organizing committee is seeking the community's support, both in the private and public sectors, to help them in making sure of the Oceania Championships and Grand Prix Series' success.

He added NMA would continue to get in touch with OAA and executive director Yvonne Mullins in conducting seminars and trainings for all officials and volunteers.

"This is the biggest event that CNMI will be hosting as far as track and field is concerned. This will give the island a glimpse of top athletes from Oceania. We're hoping for support form both the private and public sectors," Sapong said.

Aces and Giants swamp semis foes

MANILA, Philippines— Talking from experience, Tim Cone of Alaska knows that his Aces just won a game Sunday night and it's no guarantee of anything.

"I think we've won more series when we lost Game 1, but given the choice, we'd rather win it than lose it," Cone said after the Alaska Aces hacked out a 107-94 decision over the Sta. Lucia Realtors at the start of their Smart PBA Philippine Cup semifinal series at the Cuneta Astrodome in Pasay City.

"It's way, way too early to make predictions and one game doesn't decide a series," added Cone, who is seeking his 13th overall title. "It doesn't guarantee us anything."

But Cone missed the fact that his Aces are 6-5 in the best-of-seven series when they won in the opener, although this one did not come easy as they had to rally from a 10-point first quarter deficit before finally snapping Sta. Lucia's tournament-best eight-game winning streak.

In the second game, Purefoods also took a headstart in its own series against Red Bull with a 103-84 rout of the Barako.

Meanwhile, an impending coaching change nearly stole the limelight from the semifinals, with Talk 'N Text officials set to announce a revamp of its coaching staff on Monday.

Sources revealed that national coach Chot Reyes will replace Derrick Pumaren, who failed to steer a powerhouse squad to a title under his term.

Eight players scored for Alaska in the second period and the Aces managed to chop down that deficit to 45-46 at halftime.

The Aces then answered the second half horn with all guns cocked and firing. Willie Miller and Mike Cortez hit 10 each in the third period where Alaska outscored Sta. Lucia, 36-18, to take an 81-64 lead that was never threatened the rest of the way.

It was the first loss in the last nine games for the Realtors, who also lost for the first time to the Aces in the tournament.

First Game

Alaska 107 – Cortez 23, Miller 19, Cariaso 18, Hugnatan 14, Dela Cruz 14, Thoss 8, Ferriols 7, Quinahan 2, Juinio 2, Aban 0, Laure 0.

Sta. Lucia 94 – Omolon 26, Williams 21, Espino 16, Aquino 8, Mendoza 7, Yeo 6, Reyes 5, Miranda 4, Gonzales 1, Daa 0.

Quarters: 15-25, 45-46, 81-64, 107-94.

Second Game

Purefoods 103 – Raymundo 24, Lanete 18, Pingris 14, Yap R. 12, Yap J. 11, Yee 8, Simon 7, Adducul 5, Evangelista 4, Sanz 0.

Red Bull 84 – Valenzuela 15, Najorda 11, Baguio 10, Bugia 8, Sharma 8, Adriano 8, Hrabak 6, Ybanez 5, Duncil 4, Robinson 3, Cruz 3, Pennisi 3.

Quarters: 29-16; 48-44; 88-63; 103-84.

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

NBA STANDINGS

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Boston	34	8	.810	_
Toronto	24	19	.558	10 1/2
New Jersey	18	26	.409	17
Philadelphia	17	28	.378	18 1/2
New York	14	29	.326	20 1/2

Southeast Division

Orlando	28	18	.609	_
Washington	23	19	.548	3
Atlanta	18	22	.450	7
Charlotte	18	27	.400	9 1/2
Miami	9	33	.214	17

Central Division

Detroit	31	13	.705	_
Cleveland	24	19	.558	6 1/2
Indiana	19	26	.422	12 1/2
Milwaukee	18	27	.400	13 1/2
Chicago	17	26	.395	13 1/2

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Southwest Division

New Orleans	32	12	.727	_
Dallas	31	13	.705	1
San Antonio	28	15	.651	3 1/2
Houston	24	20	.545	8
Memphis	13	32	.289	19 1/2

Northwest Division

Utah	27	18	.600	_
Denver	26	18	.591	1/2
Portland	26	18	.591	1/2
Seattle	9	35	.205	17 1/2
Minnesota	8	35	.186	18

Pacific Division

Phoenix	32	13	.711	_
L.A. Lakers	27	15	.643	3 1/2
Golden State	27	18	.600	5
Sacramento	19	24	.442	12
L.A. Clippers	13	28	.317	17

Yesterday's Games

Dallas 103, Memphis 84
New Orleans 117, Denver 93
Utah 97, San Antonio 91
Charlotte 107, L.A. Clippers 100

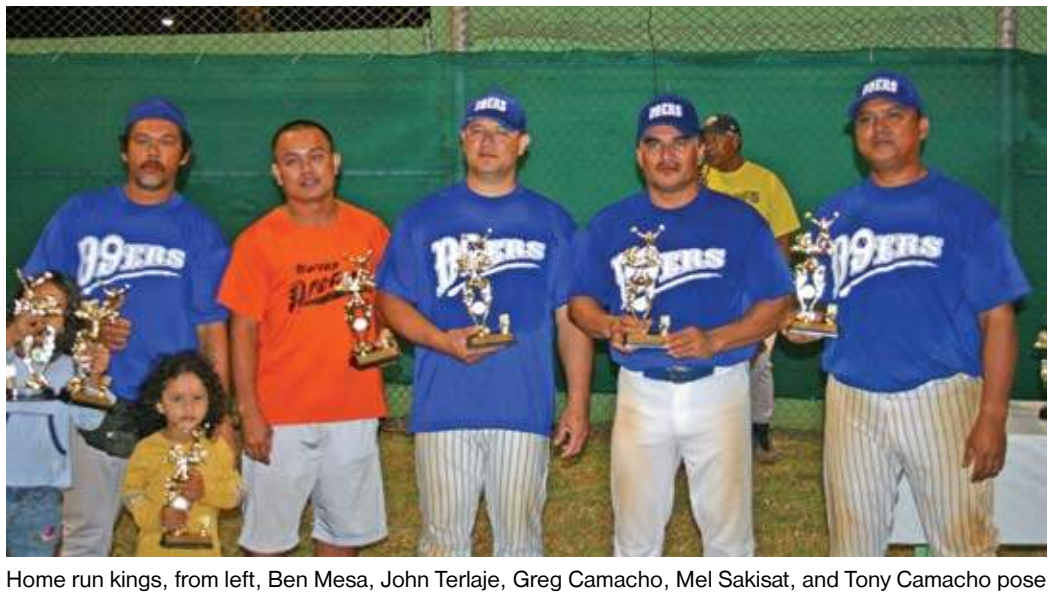
BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

LOCAL SCORES

Govt Softball Standings
Women's Division

CUC	5	1
NMC-Proa	3	1
DCCA	2	2
CHC-DPH	0	1
Finance	0	5

Streaking Tigers hoist Masters crown



Home run kings, from left, Ben Mesa, John Terlaje, Greg Camacho, Mel Sakisat, and Tony Camacho pose for the camera.

Members and fans of the Tigers pose with the championship trophy.

Tigers coach Manny Tenorio, right, receives the Masters Baseball League championship trophy from Saipan Major League president Rose Igitol, left, while Rep. Ray D. Palacios looks on.

Team Rubak pitcher Darwin Masaharu throws toward home plate.

Ed Santos of champion team Tigers throws a pitch.

A Tigers batter looks at his base hit in their playoff game against Team Rubak last Jan. 4.

SML president Rose Igitol, from left, and Rep. Ray D. Palacios award the pennant trophy to D9ers manager Jon Tenorio.

Masters pitcher Ben Duenas throws to David Kapileo of Team Rubak.

Park Sung Do of the Korean Dreams knocks in a base hit.

Team Rubak's Leo Boabai, right, waits for the pitch.

Photos and text by JON PEREZ
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REPORTER

The Tigers streaked to their fourth straight Masters Baseball League win and in the process hoisted the 2007 season crown after beating the Saipan Stevedore D9ers, 12-6, in last week's finals at the Francisco M. Palacios Baseball Field.

The Atty. Bob O'Connor-sponsored Tigers did not drop a match since suffering a 7-8 decision against the same team last Dec. 29.

They had not lost after that, even beating twice the second ranked Team Rubak of Atty. Johnson Toribiong.

Their winning streak began with a 21-11 crushing of Rubak on Jan. 4, which was a makeup match of their rained-out game last Nov. 11. They followed it up with a 20-9 thrashing of the Viva Poker Korean Dreams on Jan. 5 for their final elimination round game that gave them a third-best 3-6 record heading into the playoffs.

They went up against Rubak in the playoffs where they trailed the head-to-head match up at 1-2. They evened things up after a 9-7 win to foil the planned Rubak-D9ers finals match.

Streaking Tigers hoist Masters crown

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Saipan Tribune
Sports

Paul leads Hornets past Nuggets, New Orleans' win streak at 9

Chris Paul had 23 points, 17 assists, and nine rebounds, and the New Orleans Hornets ran away with their ninth-straight win, 117-93 over the Denver Nuggets on Monday.

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Japanese wakeboarding champion on island

Japanese national wakeboarding champion Toshiki goes airborne while testing the waters of the Saipan Lagoon yesterday.

JON PEREZ

By JON PEREZ
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REPORTER

Japanese teen wakeboarding sensation Toshiki is currently on island to enjoy the beaches and historical landmarks of Saipan and spend some free time with his friends.

The 15-year-old Toshiki arrived Monday night with friends Nari, who is also a professional wakeboarder at age 14, Natsuki, 12, and Mizuki, 10. They will be spending one week on Saipan and will return to Hyogo Prefecture next week.

Toshiki is the current national champion of the Japan Professional Wakeboard Association, winning the open title last year against older and veteran wakeboarders.

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NMA releases logo for area championships

By JON PEREZ
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REPORTER

Northern Marianas Athletics yesterday released its logo for the 2008 Oceania Athletics Association Area Championships and Grand Prix Series.

The logo, showing a running man and the CNMI's latte stones, was conceptualized by NMA officials with help from local artists. The logo also has some palm trees that is a trademark of the Pacific islands.

Saipan will be hosting the weeklong event slated from June 21 to 28 at the Oleai Track and Field facility inside the Susupe Sports Complex where 19 OAA member federations and New Caledonia will be competing.

Joining host CNMI and associate member New Caledonia in the weeklong event are powerhouse teams Australia and New Zealand as well as OAA member federations American Samoa, the Solomon Islands, the Cook Islands, Fiji, the Marshall Islands, Nauru, Norfolk Island, Samoa, the Federated States of Micronesia, Tahiti, Guam, Kiribati,

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Zapanta, Williams top January roll-off

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSISTANT EDITOR

Jakarta Asian Inter-City campaigner Raymond Zapanta and veteran keggler Emi Williams won the first ever Budweiser King and Queen of the Lanes Tournament Monday night at the Saipan Bowling Center.

Zapanta improved his tournament-leading score from the first day of the roll-off by knocking down 919 pinfalls in Day 2 of the January competition Monday.

The Northern Marianas College first year student rolled in excess of 200 pinfalls in his first three games—222, 256, and 258—before losing concentration in Game 4 with a pedestrian 176 to finish with an eye-popping per game average of 228.

"What can I say, I won the first monthly tenpin bowling tournament of the year," he said following his victory.

Zapanta, who is taking up business administration with emphasis in computer applications, obliterated 817 pinfalls Sunday, good enough for third place in the tournament. That score, however, didn't count in the final standings.

Sixty pins behind Zapanta's Monday output was lefty Richard Leong who came up with a series of 202, 234, 222, and 194 to wind up with an 852 total, good for a 213 average.

Efren Cacdac and youth bowler Jeremy Williams complete the money list with pinfall totals of 840 and 808, respectively.

Cacdac rolled a four-game series of 193, 221, 216, and 210 to average 210, while Williams put together games of 183, 185, 216, and 224 to come away with a norm of 202 pinfalls per outing.

Zapanta, Leong, Cacdac, and Williams earned $120, $60, $40, and $30, respectively, for their performances.

In the Queen of the Lanes, Emi Williams held on to the lead after her 701 total and 175.25 average Sunday wasn't surpassed Monday.

Williams strung together outings of 155, 199, 159, and 188 to take home the $70 first-place purse for the ladies.

Like Williams, Yho Villavicencio's 697 total and 174.25 average held sway Monday and allowed her to go home $60 richer.

Diane Camacho, 2007 Queen of the Lanes, finished third after putting together a 689 total and 172.25 average. She pocketed $20.

The January King and Queen of the Lanes accommodated a total of 55 entries.

Last Sunday, J.D. Torres claimed the first Prince/Princess of the Lanes Tenpin

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MARK RABAGO

Raymond Zapanta and Emi Williams show off their winnings after topping the January Budweiser King and Queen of the Lanes Tournament Monday night at the Saipan Bowling Center.

Rock Steady and Suns school foes

By JON PEREZ
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REPORTER

Veteran teams Rock Steady and Saipan Stevedore Suns took their respective opponents to school as another team was knocked out in the 2007 BANMI-Budweiser Cup Men's Islandwide Basketball League playoffs.

Rock Steady defeated the Southern Sonics, while the Suns sent the CNMI Junior Nationals to an early vacation after coasting to victory in Monday night's semifinal games at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

Scores were not available at press time since organizers have yet to locate who is keeping the score sheets of Monday's matches.

Rock Steady led by as many as 12 points midway in the second quarter, but the Sonics had a late scoring run to trim the lead to seven points at halftime.

From there, Rock Steady played to protect its lead, quashing the Sonics' repeated upset bids.

The win was important for both teams as the winner earns the first finals berth while the loser will play one more game. Rock Steady, which is composed mostly of members of the defending champion CNMI National Team, thus earned a return trip to the finals.

The Sonics will play the Suns at 7pm today with the winner facing Rock Steady, which enjoys a twice-

See ROCK STEADY on Page 26

JON PEREZ

Edsel Mendoza, center, of the Saipan Stevedore Suns slices through the defense of the CNMI Junior Nationals in Monday night's playoff match in the BANMI-Budweiser Cup Men's Islandwide Basketball League at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.